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Wind up Diana's 'tacky' fund, says earl

By Daniel McGrory

EARL SPENCER has written to all nine trustees of the memorial fund set up to honour Diana, Princess of Wales, telling them to wind up their charity, which he says is tasteless and degrading his sister's memory.

He has told them to fix a date to stop taking donations and to hand out all the money it has collected so far. The fund expects to have £100 million by the end of the year and has just taken a 20-year lease on a new headquarters in London given free by a Japanese company.

One of the earl's close aides said: "He fears the fund is never going to stop and the idea of it going on and on making money out of the Princess's name is certainly not what she would have wanted."

Lord Spencer has had many private conversations with Lady Sarah McCorquodale, his sister, who is president of the fund, about how she and her fellow trustees can best put themselves out of a job. Lady Sarah told him the fund cannot stop when it is receiving more than a £1 million a week.

He suggested to his sister that the fund should set itself a deadline, one possible date being the anniversary of the Princess's death, August 31, 2000. After that the fund should refuse to accept any further donations and tell those who want to give money or arrange merchandise deals in her name to send it to charities they know she supported.

The peer told his sister privately that he will not get involved in any more public slanging matches over the fund's "tacky stunts" such as promoting lottery scratchcards and will still give them money from his summer rock concert at Althorp and a percentage from opening the estate to tourists. But he wants her support for his plan to wrap up the charity as soon as is practicable.

He is known to have had heated discussions with at least two of the fund's leading figures. Recently he refused the fund's request to put its logo on memorabilia he will be selling to tourists at Althorp this summer.

"He does not want Diana's name, signature, face or any nickname like People's Princess on anything. This is precisely what he is against. His souvenirs will be a Spencer crest for a Spencer operation," an aide said.

Vivienne Parry, one of the trustees, accused the earl of being naive, saying: "He might wish the Diana industry to go away. It won't. In fact it's going to get bigger without us or him doing anything, so surely it is better to have the money from that going to one charity that will reflect her passions.

"I knew the Princess and none of us can say what she would have thought of it. She was mercurial."

Trustees, who admit to a lapse of judgment over allowing the Princess's signature to advertise Flora margarine in exchange for £1.25 million, have stopped endorsing merchandising deals for now. The trustees say they want to draw up guidelines about what products would be suitable. They say they are receiving more than 200 requests a week from firms wanting to use the Princess's name on items such as manure, garden furniture, alcoholic drinks and carpets.

The trustees also announced yesterday that for the time being they have stopped considering any more grant applications from charities. They have received more than 4,000 appeals and the next handout of grants is not expected until the autumn. They said they are drawing up rules for future applications. A consultation exercise should be completed by the summer.

Last month the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund announced its first round of one-off grants, totalling £13 million, to just over 100 organisations. Most of that money has still to be paid out because 95 of the smaller charities have yet to submit acceptable plans showing how they intend to put their grants to use.

Angry earl, page 7
Leading article, page 23
Diana's fountain, Weekend, page 3

Tourists claim £1m payout for holiday misery

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

PACKAGE tour companies are braced for record compensation demands for ruined holidays as tourists launch new-style legal actions with consumer powers enabling them to sue operators for everything that goes wrong abroad.

More than 600 people who suffered food poisoning on their Turkish package holidays last year are claiming compensation from Airtours.

In one of the biggest group claims of its kind, compensation has already been paid to settle a third of the claims. One honeymoon couple received £4,000 after contracting severe gastroenteritis. The likely total claim is expected to exceed £1 million.

The holidaymakers are exploiting a European Community directive on package holidays which, since 1992, has made tour operators legally liable for any mishap during a trip abroad, from food poisoning to hotel room fires.

Claims by 2,000 tourists against 10 tour operators are being co-ordinated by the Sheffield law firm Irwin Mitchell, which has a specialist international travel litigation team. Thomson is being sued by 450 people for holiday grief in resorts including Ibiza, Menorca and Crete.

Travel companies have been warned by the *International Travel Law Journal* that things will get worse. An editorial by a lawyer, Stephen Mason, says the industry can expect a growth in either group claims or representative claims when one person brings an action against a tour operator and the result of the case sets a binding precedent.



Two tour operators have pulled out of the Dominican Republic, fearing litigation as 500 visitors to the Caribbean island pursue claims against various companies.

Brenda Wall, founder of the pressure group Holiday Travelwatch, said Britons have returned from the "Dom Rep" — where a fortnight can cost as little as £400 but the sewers cannot cope — with 12 notifiable diseases.

The 600 tourists who fell ill in Turkey are suing Airtours in a claim being handled by Freeth Cartwright in Nottingham. A family of five including a Down's syndrome child have received £5,222.

Their solicitor Jane Goulding said: "People suffered symptons such as stomach cramps, dizziness and sickness and diarrhoea, most of which lasted several days, but some were suffering for months and a few people are still ill. Badly cooked food, poor refrigeration and dirty crockery can all combine to cause health problems that can ruin a holiday and continue to cause serious problems after returning home."

Holidaymakers are becoming organised, contacting others from the same hotel, exchanging telephone numbers on the flight home and using video cameras to provide evidence.

Travel law experts say group litigation gives power to people who might otherwise be picked off individually with small compensation offers.

Legal reforms such as those proposed by Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, and the proposed extension of "no win, no fee" litigation will make such actions easier.

Stuart Henderson, a travel litigation partner at Irwin Mitchell, said: "Tour operators are suddenly waking up to the idea that they could face mass litigation in the whole area of preventable illness. They must clean up their act or face huge litigation."

He said that 90 per cent of the personal injury claims relate to illness arising from poor food hygiene and in 10 per cent of cases people suffered long-term effects such as irritable bowel syndrome. "So we are not talking here about gippy tummy. We have cases of typhoid, cholera and legionnaires' disease."

Holiday Which? said: "The number of hygiene casualties, and consequently the number of complaints, has rocketed in the last few years since tour operators introduced all-inclusive package holidays with hotels that serve buffet-style food on a large scale."

Airtours said it was trying to settle claims "amicably, through solicitors". Thomson said it could not comment as the matter was with solicitors.

WEATHER 32
CROSSWORD 32
COURT & SOCIAL 24
LETTERS 23
OBITUARIES 25
SIMON JENKINS 22
THEATRES 21
BUSINESS NEWS 27-31
UNIT TRUSTS 49
SHARE PRICES 26
WEEKEND MONEY 50-64
SPORT 33-45

WEEKEND
GARDENING 9, 10
PROPERTY 13, 14
TRAVEL 23-31
FAITH 21

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CHRIS HARRIS

Paul Burrell, the former butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, preparing for tomorrow's London Marathon. He is a member of *The Times* team. Where to watch, page 40

Cup ticket hotline bans British fans

By Adrian Lee

THE World Cup ticket hotline has banned fans of England and Scotland from buying the few remaining tickets for matches involving their own teams. Supporters from other European countries who get through to the World Cup hotline are still able to buy tickets for England and Scotland games.

Organisers in France said the decision was taken for security reasons because they wanted to create neutral areas in the stadiums. "We are not telling the fans about this because they won't understand," said one official. Several hundred tickets for each of England and Scotland's three group games are believed to be at stake.

Football's governing body Fifa yesterday admitted yesterday that mistakes had been made over the ticket arrangements, which were likely to be changed in the future.

Leading article, page 23
Brian Glanville, page 36



Easier to see

Yellow football makes its debut

Football enthusiasts who watch *Match of the Day* tonight should not adjust their sets. The ball used in the match between Everton and Sheffield Wednesday will be fluorescent yellow. The "Mitre Ultimax Fluo Flare", which has been a year in development, could become a regular fixture if it is approved by the players. The ball is easier to see.

"I say we toast the Hen."





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Kigali crowd cheers genocide executions



Twenty-two people were executed in Rwanda yesterday for their part in the massacre of 500,000 people in 1994. David Orr reports from Kigali where he witnessed the first executions for genocide since the Nuremberg Trials

TENS of thousands had assembled at the football field by the time the four prisoners appeared. To cheers, three men and a woman were taken from a van and led to four wooden stakes driven into the ground. They wore Rwandan prison uniforms, pink tops and shorts for the men, a pink tunic for the woman. All were barefoot.

They betrayed no emotion as they were bound by ropes to the posts, first their legs, then their waists, finally their chests. A murmur ran through the crowd and spectators strained to see as black hoods were placed over their heads. Gendarmes placed rectangles of white cloth on their chests.

At the centre of each cloth was a black square. The square was not high enough on the first prisoner, so the man in the jacket adjusted it carefully. The gendarmes and soldiers overseeing preparations checked their work and stood back, apparently satisfied. It was 10.30 in the morning.

The spectators were gathered 30 or 40 deep around three sides of the hillside pitch in Nyamirambo, a poor suburb of the capital, Kigali. Armed military patrolled the high ground above the far sideline where the doomed prisoners awaited their fate.

Some young men had climbed into trees to get a better view, others sat, legs dangling, on the crossbars of the goals. A woman held her young daughter aloft so she could see the four.

A well-dressed man said: "This is justice being done." A young man in jeans said: "This will serve as an example to people who might try to organise genocide in future."

Then they were quiet. The mood was palpably tense and the attitude of the spectators towards the only whites — foreign journalists — hostile. Further questions were greeted with monosyllabic answers or silence.

It had been announced earlier that no cameras and no recording equipment would be allowed. Soldiers with sticks frequently beat back the surging crowd.

At 10.50, two white Land Rovers, one with "Traffic Police" written on the side, pulled up at a corner of the pitch. Five gendarmes in blue uniforms jumped out. Over their faces they wore small black drapes with eyeholes.

Without ceremony, they dashed up to the four prisoners and, at a distance of no more than 12ft, pumped volley after volley of automatic gunfire into their chests.

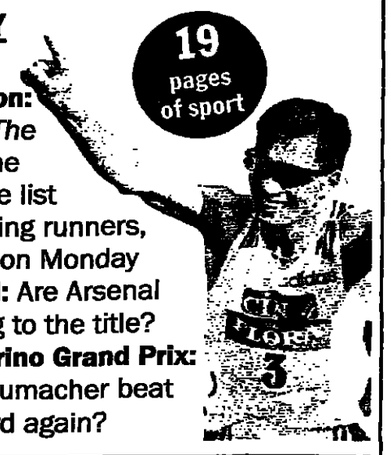
The crowd cheered and clapped as a sixth gendarme raised a pistol and shot each drooping head at point-blank range.

"That's the way my family was killed," said one man. "They have to understand life is precious. They killed

Continued on page 2, col 4

NEXT WEEK IN THE TIMES

Under the skin of sport



MONDAY

London Marathon: Only in *The Times* the complete list of finishing runners, starting on Monday

Football: Are Arsenal storming to the title?

San Marino Grand Prix: Can Schumacher beat Coulthard again?

Plus

EXCLUSIVE: Christopher Reeve: How I struggled to breathe and almost died

TUESDAY

ARE YOU BEING SERVED? Jason Cowley on life in a department store

WEDNESDAY

Inter//face: Eton gets wired

Plus: Crème – best for jobs

Arts: Richard Morrison meets Daniel Barenboim

THURSDAY



Books: Times critics on V S Naipaul, Isabel Allende, Tariq Ali and A N Wilson

Films: Gwyneth Paltrow stars in Sliding Doors

FRIDAY

Rock and pop



SATURDAY

In the magazine:

Gloria Estefan Queen of Miami

Anger as nuclear waste arrives

Convoy sparks harsh words but no protests, reports **Shirley English**

THE Scottish Nationalists accused the Government yesterday of "extraordinary bad faith" following the arrival of nuclear waste at Dounreay from the former Soviet Union.

The consignment of 4.3kg of highly-enriched, weapons grade uranium, and 0.8kg of irradiated fuel was transported in two lorries under armed police guard the 140 miles from RAF Kinloss, east of Inverness, to the Caithness nuclear plant where it is to be stored and reprocessed.

It had been flown from Tbilisi, Georgia, overnight on two US Airforce air freighters to Kinloss, Scotland, where it was then transferred in the early hours into the unmarked lorries. The five rods, held in two 20 tonnes containers for safety, were then driven passed numerous towns, including Inverness, and north up the A9 to Dounreay..

There were no demonstrations by anti-nuclear campaigners to greet its arrival at the 40-year-old plant, which lost its licence to reprocess irradiated spent nuclear fuel 18 months ago. Lorraine Mann, convenor of Scotland Against Nuclear Dumping said she was "not happy" about the consignment but felt in the long term it was better that it was stored safely in Scotland, than in Georgia where its security could not be guaranteed.

Brian Wilson, Scottish Industry Minister, accused Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, of "political point scoring" and a "dangerous and cynical falsehood" in alleging that the nuclear waste from Georgia would not be used for medical purposes as the Government claimed. Mr Wilson called on Mr Salmond to apologise to the Dounreay workforce and withdraw his comments. He said: "The simple statement of fact is that the material from Georgia will lead to the production of about one thousand targets which in turn will provide some five million treatment doses for the benefit of cancer sufferers. There is currently a shortage of these materials."

A defiant Mr Salmond accused the Government of misleading the public with "a gloss of simplicity" over Dounreay's capability to directly transform the waste for medical use, work which he claimed would have to be completed, probably in Holland. He argued that there was not a shortage, but instead of glut, of highly enriched uranium in the world.

He added that the "real issues" on this matter were the conduct of the government in reaching a secret deal, neglecting to tell the people of Scotland until the information was leaked to the *New York Times* and flouting regulations governing the importation of nuclear material.

Meanwhile Greenpeace said it was taking legal advice on whether safety regulations had been adhered to. The campaign group has now written to John Prescott, the deputy Prime Minister, to ask how he justified the reprocessing at Dounreay and whether alternatives had been considered. The Government admitted that policy on dealing with nuclear waste had been altered for this "one-off" consignment.

Picture, page 32
Letters, page 23

UDA backs Ulster's new peace agreement

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

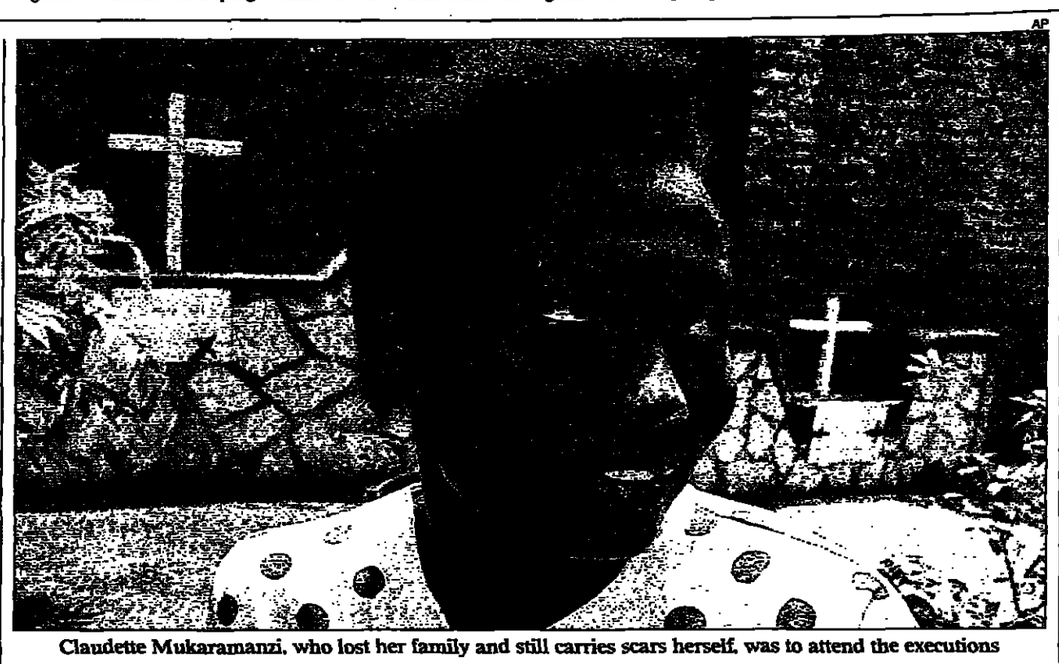
NORTHERN Ireland's largest loyalist paramilitary organisation gave the new peace agreement a timely boost last night when it called for a "Yes" vote in the May 22 referendum.

The Ulster Defence Association said it was uncomfortable with some aspects of the agreement, but was satisfied that Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom was secure. The UDA statement came a day after the deep divisions within Unionism had been starkly exposed by a huge rally against the agreement at Belfast's Ulster Hall.

Three of David Trimble's nine Ulster Unionist Party MPs shared the platform with the Rev Ian Paisley and Bob McCartney, leaders of the rival Democratic Unionist and UK Unionist Parties. Three other UUP MPs who also oppose the agreement did not attend.

The UUP yesterday dismissed the rally as "pure moonshine" and said that the participants had no credible alternative to offer. The UDA denounced those who "would seek to drag our society back to conflict", and pointed out that it was not DUP or UKUP members who had filled the prisons throughout the past 30 years".

IRA kneecapping, page 6



Claudette Mukaramanzi, who lost her family and still carries scars herself, was to attend the executions

Rwanda firing squads shoot 22 for genocide

Continued from page 1

nearly a million and now four of them have been shot. But it's the lesson that counts, not the numbers."

The bodies were untied, placed on stretchers and loaded into the backs of the vehicles. Most of the crowd filed quickly away. Some journalists were pushed and stoned by angry mobs.

Public executions were carried out in four others parts of the country, despite last-minute pleas for clemency, including one by the Pope. By midday 22 people had died for their part in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The sites were places where significant massacres had occurred.

The executions were the first for genocide since the Nuremberg Trials after the Second World War. Those executed had been found guilty by Rwandan courts, not of having themselves wielded machetes or fired shots, but of having led the killings. At least 500,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered during three months of butchery by extremist Hutu militias and members of the former Rwandan Army.

Foremost among those executed in Kigali yesterday was Froduald Karamira, the first major suspect to appear in court. Formerly vice-president of a hardline Hutu group called MDR Power, Karamira appeared daily on Hutu extremist radio stations exhorting the Hutu majority to "cleanse" their communities of Tutsi "cockroaches".

Those who died with him were Elie Nshimiyimana, once director of a school of agriculture, Silas Munyagishari, a public prosecutor, and Virginie Mukankusi, a schools inspector in Kigali.

Human rights groups have voiced concern about the conduct of the genocide trials. Amnesty International said that defendants had often been denied adequate time and facilities to prepare their cases. Some were given notice of their trial dates and access to their files only days before the start of proceedings.

More public executions are due to be held in coming months. At least 330 people have been tried in Rwanda on charges relating to the genocide. A third of those have been convicted and sentenced to death. Another third have been convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Some 125,000 languish in poor conditions in overcrowded prisons awaiting trial.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ex-minister tipped for anti-euro campaign

Lord Marsh of Mannington, a former Labour Cabinet Minister, is being tipped by Tory Eurosceptics, to head a new group of businessmen opposed to scrapping the pound. Lord Marsh, 70, would chair a "Keep the Pound" group under proposals being discussed privately by British Eurosceptics.

Roderick Nye, director of the free-market think-tank, the Social Market Foundation, is being suggested as a possible full-time chief executive of the new body dedicated to challenging the view that big firms are solidly behind the euro.

School paper war

A wave of industrial action will start in schools on Monday when teachers begin a boycott of excessive paperwork by refusing to write any report longer than 400 words. On Friday leaders of the Nasuwt, the second-largest teachers' union, will meet to consider government proposals to cut back on bureaucracy in schools.

Boy, 11, 'had pot'

An boy of 11 has been suspended from his primary school in Melksham, Wiltshire, after teachers found cannabis in his pocket. Staff immediately called police and the boy, who has not been named, was taken home. Last year, a boy of nine was expelled from his school in Barnet, North London, after being caught with cannabis.

Briton drowned

Fred Billington, 73, who vowed to "live life to the full" when he retired, has drowned after being pulled into the sea by a freak wave while on holiday in the Caribbean. The former Rolls-Royce worker, of Guilsfield, Powys, was walking along a beach in St Lawrence, Barbados, with his wife Beryl, 67, when the accident happened.

Editor hope

The Independent said it hoped to appoint a new editor within the next week after Rosie Boycott, Britain's first national broadsheet editor who campaigned to legalise cannabis, moved over to *The Express*. She replaced Richard Addis, the former *Daily Mail* journalist who has edited *The Express* for more than two years.

Top of the flops

Manchester United scored a musical own goal, releasing a CD celebrating a championship victory which could now go to Arsenal. With the London side now favourite for the Premiership title, United fans were left cursing their club's poor timing. *Sing Up For the Champions*, featuring the voices of supporters, could be obsolete within weeks.

Police role planned for traffic wardens

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

TRAFFIC wardens may be given extra powers allowing them to stop drivers breaching motoring regulations such as using bus lanes.

The plans have been put forward by chief constables to a Home Office committee examining ways of reducing unnecessary police work and allowing highly paid constables to concentrate on fighting crime.

Traffic wardens would no longer be limited to issuing parking tickets or directing traffic when signals break down. Instead they would be given powers to deal with moving traffic offences. They would be able to halt and book drivers using bus lanes or blocking hatched boxes at major junctions. They would replace police officers at checkpoints used by the Department of Transport to monitor fuel emissions and other regulations.

The proposals were announced yesterday by Paul Manning, an Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and police spokesman on traffic policy.

Police chief bows to demands for resignation

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE 37-year career of Ian Oliver, the Chief Constable of Grampian Police, ended last night when he bowed to increasing pressure and agreed to leave his post with immediate effect.

At a hastily convened press conference in Aberdeen, Grampian Police Board announced that he had tendered his resignation from his £73,000-a-year job. Dr Oliver, 58, is understood to have left his desk for the last time last night. He will take leave until May 24 when he officially retires, three months early, on an annual pension of £60,000.

The clamour for his resignation spread this week when Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, told him to "pack his bags and go" after a damning independent report into Grampian Police. The force was accused of "corporate failure" over its investigation into the kidnapping and murder of Scott Simpson, aged nine, by known paedophile Steven Liesk in Aberdeen last year.

London-born Dr Oliver followed his father into the Metropolitan Police in 1961 and rose quickly through the ranks. A graduate of law and philosophy from Nottingham University, he moved to Northumbria Police in 1977, winning promotion to assistant chief constable.

Two years later he became Britain's youngest Chief Constable when he joined Central Scotland Police at the age of 39. He took charge at Grampian in 1990 after being awarded the Queen's Police Medal for distinguished service.

From the start his intellect and outspoken remarks, particularly his hardline stance on drugs, made him a man to watch. He was the first to introduce voluntary drug tests for police in Grampian and volunteered his force for CS gas canister trials. He sparked outrage after Dunblane by stating that a gun ban would be unworkable.

Earlier this year he resisted calls to resign after pictures of him embracing a married woman half his age appeared in a newspaper. But it was Dr Oliver's refusal to accept mistakes had been made in the Scott Simpson investigation that proved his downfall.

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MP gives beer drinkers short measure

Nicholas Watt and **James Landale** report as Bill for full pint falls flat

WITH a guttural shout of "object", a Tory MP yesterday singlehandedly quashed the chances of drinkers being served a full pint of beer or cider in the nation's pubs and clubs.

Eric Forth (Bromley and Chislehurst) used the parliamentary device to kill off a Private Member's Bill that would have made it an offence to disguise short measures under a head of froth.

Pubs across Britain, which were preparing to order hundreds of thousands of oversized glasses to comply with the new regulations, were able to relax thanks to the brief intervention by Mr Forth.

The Campaign for Real Ale, which had argued that the Bill would have heralded the most important reform of licensing regulations, was bitterly disappointed by the parliamentary ambush. The group says that drinkers are being ripped off and estimates that 80 per cent of pints are short measures.

When the Weights and Measures (Beer and Cider) Bill came up for its report stage in the Commons, Mr Forth remained seated on the Tory benches as he shouted "object". His intervention ensured that the Bill has virtually no chance of becoming law when it returns to the House in July.

The move was a blow for Dennis Turner, Labour MP for Wolverhampton South East, who has devoted virtually every working hour to promote his Bill. Ian McCartney, the Trade and Industry Minister, last night attacked Mr Forth: "I was absolutely astonished and angered that a former Minister of State of a government that fiddled unemployment figures now, in Opposition, wants to fiddle the contents of the British pint."Nigel Griffiths, the Consumer Affairs Minister, accused Tory MPs of colluding with "backward-looking breweries". He said: "Other breweries have shown the way forward and supported this measure. Wolverhampton and Dudley Brewery has sold beer in oversized glasses for 20 years with no evidence that its products are more expensive than standard pints served next door."

Mr Griffiths insisted that all was not lost and that the Bill could be salvaged when it comes before the House for the last time in July. "This is a setback for the Bill, but it is not the death knell."

Mr Griffiths said that if the Bill did fall in July, he would give serious consideration to introducing government legislation to ensure that drinkers got a proper pint. "We are actively looking at alternatives," he said.

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Gay son was MP's crusade inspiration

Reunion after adoption led to age of consent drive, says **Andrew Pierce**

THE WOMAN MP who is leading the parliamentary campaign for homosexual sex to be legalised for 16-year-olds took up the cause after being reunited with her gay son who was adopted 30 years ago.

Ann Keen will next month table the amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill which is certain to create by the summer an equal age of consent for heterosexual and gay young people.

Mark Lloyd Fox, 31, her only child, last night told *The Times* of his pride that his mother had decided to champion the crusade for homosexual equality. He also talked about the moment when he told his mother he was gay.

Mrs Keen's decision to table the amendment was given a poignant twist by the disclosure that she was reunited with her son in 1995 — 27 years after he was adopted.

Mr Lloyd Fox said: "I am proud that Ann has decided to lead the Commons fight for fairness and equality. But, knowing her now as I do, her politics are all about fairness and justice for everyone."

Mr Lloyd Fox, who was adopted as a baby in 1967, tracked down his birth mother after making contact through Mrs Keen's sister — the Labour MP Sylvia Heal. Mother and son have just returned from a holiday in Canada.

He told her about his sexuality immediately. Mrs Keen, 49, who was elected MP for Brentford and Isleworth last year joining her husband, Alan, a fellow Labour MP, and sister. She said: "I was not sad that he was gay. But for many years I had pictures in my mind about what had happened to him.

"I thought he must have had some pain at some stage about it, that his life had not always been as easy as I had hoped it had been. He told me that he had always been OK. But I am very aware that for most gay people it is a painful process to go through."

> "I was not sad that he was gay. I thought he must have had some pain at some stage, that his life had not always been as easy as I had hoped"

The amendment, which will pass into law because of Labour's huge majority, will ensure Mrs Keen a place in the history books. Mr Lloyd-Fox, development director at the Commonwealth Institute, gives her advice on gay-related issues such as discrimination.

A former campaigner for the Tory party, he joined Labour after the reunion. He supports Stonewall, the group set up to campaign for equality for homosexuals, which is leading the Commons campaign. "Young people when they are coming out need all the support they can get. We have to change laws which make it more different and less acceptable to be gay."

In a joint interview with Mrs Keen in *The Pink* newspaper, he talked about the search which took only four days. "I was delighted when I met her and somewhat relieved to find she looked like a cross between Dusty Springfield and Sharon Gless [the star of television detective show *Cagney and Lacey*]."

The meeting between Mrs Keen and her son has echoes of Clare Short who was also reunited with her son. Mr Lloyd Fox said: "It was extraordinarily emotional. Words cannot do it justice."

Mrs Keen had been brought up in North Wales with the advice: don't bring trouble home. When she did, she was despatched by her parents to the Brecon and Swansea Moral Welfare Association.

She said she was made to feel selfish for wanting to keep her child who she was advised never to see. All she had was an armband, a bootie, and a photograph sent to her when her son was six weeks old.

She was married in 1980 to Alan, who had two children, but never had any more children. During the intervening years she marked imaginary milestones in his life such as passing his driving test.

Mr Lloyd Fox, meanwhile, had discovered by accident at the age of 28 that he was adopted. His adoptive parents supported his decision to track down his birth mother, and they are all now friends.

Mother and son have more work ahead of them after the age of consent vote.

Pensions, rights over council house tenancies, and section 28, the law which prohibits local authorities to promote homosexuality in a positive light, are next on their agenda.

Mrs Keen admitted only one curiosity about her son's sexuality when she visited his flat. "It is in such a mess. Beer cans and pizza boxes. I was led to believe that gay men led really tidy lifestyles and all had ideal homes. I look at his scruffy flat and say: "It wasn't supposed to be like that."

PIERS ALLARDYCE/PINK PAPER



Ann Keen and her son, Mark Lloyd Fox, who backs her Commons efforts

How Cherie balances work and home life

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

CHERIE BOOTH, QC, yesterday spoke of the "pleasure" of being a career woman and her determination to continue as a leading Queen's Counsel and part-time judge.

After a punishing week of official engagements, including accompanying the Prime Minister to the Middle East, Ms Booth said her career was as important to her as ever.

Ms Booth, whose briefs in the last year have ranged from acting for Martin Neary, the choirmaster sacked from Westminster Abbey, to a lesbian couple seeking equal work benefits, told *The Times*: "I am very happy I have managed to sustain my career. It is very important to me. It is something I have achieved in my own right and it is what gives me great pleasure and satisfaction. And I certainly intend to go on getting that pleasure."

Since moving into Downing Street, Ms Booth, 43, has succeeded in confounding pessimists who predicted she would fail to combine her career at the Bar with her duties as Prime Minister's consort and mother of three.

"I try to manage my workload like everyone else," she said. "But I think that nobody ever gets the balance right. It would be surprising if anyone said they were entirely happy." She was speaking on the eve of this year's Woman Lawyer conference in London, where the theme is how to achieve the balance between home and career.

Her answer was: "You have to constantly look at what you are doing, make sure it accords with the priorities you have at the time. These priorities change in the course of our lives. When you start work, you might give more time to build up your practice, or when your children are young you might give more time to them or you might give more time later on. No one should pretend that when you have teenage children it is any easier."

Achieving the balance between home and work was an issue for men as much as for women, she added. "Many more men are starting to wonder if they have the balance wrong, whether they are too much work-oriented and too little family-oriented. But everyone has to make a personal choice as to how to achieve that balance and what is right for them."

Ms Booth said the Bar, where women were finally making it to the top — this year a record ten women QCs were appointed — had the advantage that barristers were self-employed and could enjoy flexible working arrangements.

"What we need in law, as in other professions, is the ability to adjust our working lives to suit the situation in which we find ourselves."

She has had to make that adjustment, though is reluctant to talk about it. Her caseload in the past year has inevitably had to be reduced to fit in official engagements. But she has still succeeds in landing a regular flow of cases, many high-profile, and is reputedly still earning more than £100,000 a year.

She is also maintaining her work as a part-time judge: the week after next she starts a fortnight's sitting in a London county court on civil cases.



Cherie Booth: her career is as important to her as ever

Kavanagh on fraud charge

BY ALAN HAMILTON

THE makers of *Kavanagh QC*, the ITV legal drama starring John Thaw, are in the dock today charged with dealing in counterfeit accents.

Residents of Norfolk will use Channel 4's *Right To Reply* programme to claim that the producers of a recent episode set in Norwich are guilty of turning the county's distinctive dialect into an all-purpose "oo-arr" rustic burr which sounds more like a bad comedian's attempt at West Country *patois*.

Complaints centre on three characters playing Norfolk locals who are accused of mouthing lines no true son of the county would recognise. Keith Skipper, of Cromer, one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution, who will next week judge his town's annual Norfolk dialect competition, says in tonight's programme: "These characters instantly started aaring; we don't aar in Norfolk."

Mr Skipper, 54, a freelance journalist, added: "One was a policeman who, when asked a question, replied 'nuttin'. Nutting is something you do in woods. It is not something we do here. If a Norfolk man means 'nothing', he says 'noffin'. I think it is an insult to us, and an insult to the people whose dialects they think we speak in." If you didn't know, you would think Norfolk was somewhere between Devon and Dorset."

Central Television, which makes *Kavanagh*, defended the programme, saying that, of ten million viewers of the episode, none had complained. A spokesman said the programme makers did their best to reproduce dialects accurately and use local actors, but it was not always possible to find locals who were right for the parts.

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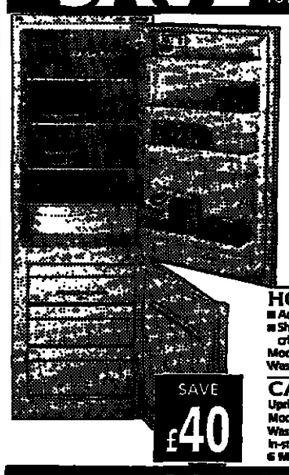
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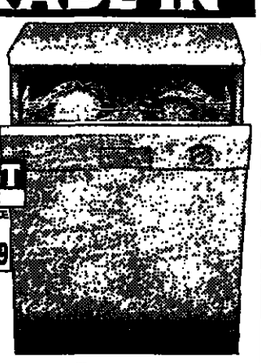
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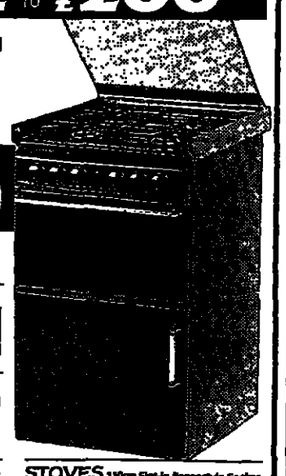
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هكذا من الاصل

Japanese sex bias case ends with secret deal

PETER JORDAN



Statton: it is not known if she will receive a cash sum

Sacked businesswoman withdraws claim after fierce cross-questioning, reports Peter Foster

A BUSINESSWOMAN who claimed she had been bombarded with sexist and racist comments by her Japanese boss yesterday withdrew her allegations after reaching an out-of-court settlement.

Lisa-Jane Statton, 37, had told an industrial tribunal that Mac Okamoto, the European head of the Shirayama Shokusan corporation, which owns the London Aquarium, had pestered her for after work dinner appointments because he wanted to have sex with her.

Yesterday afternoon she withdrew her claims as she reached a confidential settlement with her employers. In a joint statement lawyers for both sides said: "All allegations of sexual and racial discrimination have now been withdrawn as the parties have resolved their differences amicably." Neither side would say if Miss Statton will receive a cash sum as part of an agreement that she makes no further comment on her tribual claims.

The agreement came after Miss Statton spent the morning being cross-examined by lawyers for the Shirayama corporation who accused her of concocting her story because she was being squeezed out of her job by the appointment of a new financial controller of the aquarium.

Andrew Hillier, for the corporation, said Miss Statton was unable to point to any specific moment when Mr Okamoto had tried to make sexual advances. Miss Statton said she felt that he was trying to seduce her with gifts including a £5,200 watch and an 18ct gold watch band and was taking an unusual interest in her personal appearance and previous boyfriends. "He wanted to mould me into his ideal woman," she said.

Mr Hillier suggested it was absurd to suggest that Mr Okamoto's remarks about the growing supremacy of China as an economic power and his refusal to fly the Union Jack above the aquarium in County Hall amounted to racial harassment. He conceded that Mr Okamoto, who is alleged to have called Diana, Princess of Wales a "bloody big nosed Princess", was an anti-royalist but said it was fanciful to suggest that such comments were racially discriminatory.

Miss Statton, who has has British and American nationality, replied: "It was very insulting and, I felt, a direct attack on both my nationalities. I'm very patriotic and all my family fly the flag."

Mr Hillier also challenged her allegation that her boss had described British women as "fat pigs". Miss Statton replied: "He did say that, those were his exact words. He also said British women had legs like tree trunks."

Mr Hillier said: "But are you seriously saying that it is an illegal comment to say that British women have fat legs?"

Miss Statton also claimed that Mr Okamoto had once asked her if she had had plastic surgery, a question she found extremely offensive. Mr Hillier told the tribunal at Croydon, South London, that Mr Okamoto already knew this because, while on a business trip to Barcelona, Miss Statton had refused to go on a big dipper because she had plastic surgery.

He told the tribunal that Mr Okamoto had lent Miss Statton his mobile telephone so she could call her doctor in England to check if it was safe for her to go on the big dipper ride. Miss Statton agreed she had made the call but denied she had told Mr Okamoto her reasons for not going on the rollercoaster.

Earlier, she alleged that Mr Okamoto had disparaged the actress Pamela Anderson and the Spice Girls when she suggested booking them for the opening of the aquarium in March last year. "He said they were bloody fake plastic women and he didn't want them."

Miss Statton, who was hired in August 1996 to oversee the launch of the aquarium, was dismissed from her £47,000 post last November. The corporation, which denied her allegations, said she was dismissed because she had failed to attract enough visitors to the aquarium.

RUSSELL BOYCE/REUTERS



Mac Okamoto: denied making sexual advances

Musician awarded £200,000 after fall

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A GIFTED classical musician whose career was ruined after she tripped over a paving slab and shattered her wrist was awarded damages of more than £200,000 against a London borough yesterday.

The fall had a "devastating effect" on Belinda Byers and her career, the High Court was told. Miss Byers, now 31, was 25 and had trained on the double bass in Italy with Franco Petracchi, one of the foremost players and teachers of the instrument in the world, Deputy Judge Michael Harvey, QC, said.

Miss Byers was awarded £209,542 against the borough of Brent. The council admitted liability but contested the amount of damages. The judge awarded her £134,000 for lost earnings and interest, £20,000 for her pain and suffering, and £7,500 for the loss of her career as a musician and "the pleasure which she undoubtedly derived from playing". She had been forced to cancel concerts and had not been able to play the double bass or any other stringed instrument since the accident in June 1992 in Kilburn, North London. Experts had described her as "exceptional and very talented", the judge said.

It was her ambition to be a soloist in chamber music. But now she had even stopped listening to classical music because of the distress it caused her, he added.

Miss Byers, of Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, suffered a severe attack of repetitive strain disorder, followed by chronic pain syndrome, the judge said.

She has since retrained as a youth worker. Outside court she said: "I'm glad it is all over, but sad at losing the career I loved."

Last night Brent council said that it regretted "this tragic incident that has had far-reaching consequences for Miss Byers."

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Belfast voices disgust at maiming of man, 79

Peace or no peace, IRA gun law still holds sway in parts of the Province, writes **Martin Fletcher**

A WAVE of horror and revulsion swept Northern Ireland yesterday after republican paramilitaries kneecapped a 79-year-old man, the oldest person to suffer such a fate.

A masked gang broke into the pensioner's high-rise flat in the New Lodge area of North Belfast late on Thursday evening, tied him up, beat him and shot him in both knees and ankles. He was in a stable condition in hospital last night.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said the attack was beyond comprehension and the perpetrators deserved the "utmost contempt". Chief Inspector Mervyn Patton of the RUC called it "a sickening attack on a weak and defenceless pensioner" and pledged to hunt down those responsible. Glyn Roberts, a spokesman for the Belfast group Families Against Intimidation and Terror, asked: "How on earth can these people live with themselves?"

New Lodge is as tough an area as any in Belfast. It is separated from the loyalist stronghold of Tiger Bay by a steel "peace line" that slices across the half-abandoned streets of dingy terraced homes. Its police station is a fortress whose inhabitants seldom venture out except in armoured Land Rovers. Here the IRA controls the streets, stamping out "antisocial behaviour" with its own brutal form of summary justice.

To be shot in both knees and both ankles is at the extreme end of its range. The rumourmongers were quickly at work, but police said that the pensioner had no criminal record and nothing incriminating was found in his flat.

"At 79 years of age, you don't get kneecapped unless it's something really bad," said one resident. "He didn't get it for saying his prayers," remarked another.

The man lived on the seventh floor of Eithne House, one of a clutch of spartan post-war high-rises with dark halls, gloomy lifts and bare concrete walls. The top of a neighbouring block was long ago commandeered as an army lookout post.

A woman who lives in the same high-rise returned from a meeting about the peace agreement on Thursday night as the terrified victim was being carried to an ambulance. "His nose was bloody. His trousers had been cut off and I saw a bandage round his knee," she said. "I'm surprised he didn't die last night. He'll have to end up in a wheelchair."

Few occupants of Eithne House would talk to reporters yesterday, and none would give a names. On the seventh floor, where the wind howled across the filthy landing and the letters "IRA" were scrawled across one wall, only one man opened his door and he would say nothing.

On a lower floor, a woman said neither the ceasefire nor the peace agreement would make any difference to New Lodge. "They will never give up control, never," she said of the IRA. "When you're living in areas like this you have to abide by their rules. People are just getting on the same way they've always done." Thursday's victim would never be allowed to return.

In another kneecapping on Thursday night, a man aged 20 was shot in both legs in the Twinbrook area of West Belfast — also an IRA stronghold.

☐ Hundreds of mourners attended the funeral of Adrian Lamph, the 29-year-old Roman Catholic killed by loyalists in Portadown on Tuesday. The Right Rev Gerard Clifford, Bishop of Armagh, condemned the men of violence who felt so threatened by the prospect of a settlement that "they are willing to kill and murder to ensure peace never comes".

PAUL McERLANE



Nichola McKee carrying the coffin of her murdered boyfriend, Adrian Lamph, who was shot by loyalists

Ulster forum is disbanded after peace accord

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE Northern Ireland Forum met for the last time in Belfast yesterday before being disbanded. Set up in June 1996 to work in parallel with the multiparty talks at Stormont, its demise was sealed when the talks ended in agreement on Good Friday.

Unionists insisted on the forum being established, with the elections to it used to provide a mandate for the parties invited to the multiparty talks. The ten parties with the most votes were given seats in the forum and entry to the talks.

Nationalists dismissed it as irrelevant and Sinn Fein, after getting its mandate, never took its seats. The SDLP attended for a few weeks and then quit. Last September the UK Unionists also pulled out.

It never had any power and was often dismissed as little more than a talking shop. But John Gorman, its chairman, a Roman Catholic Unionist, insisted yesterday that it had done valuable work.

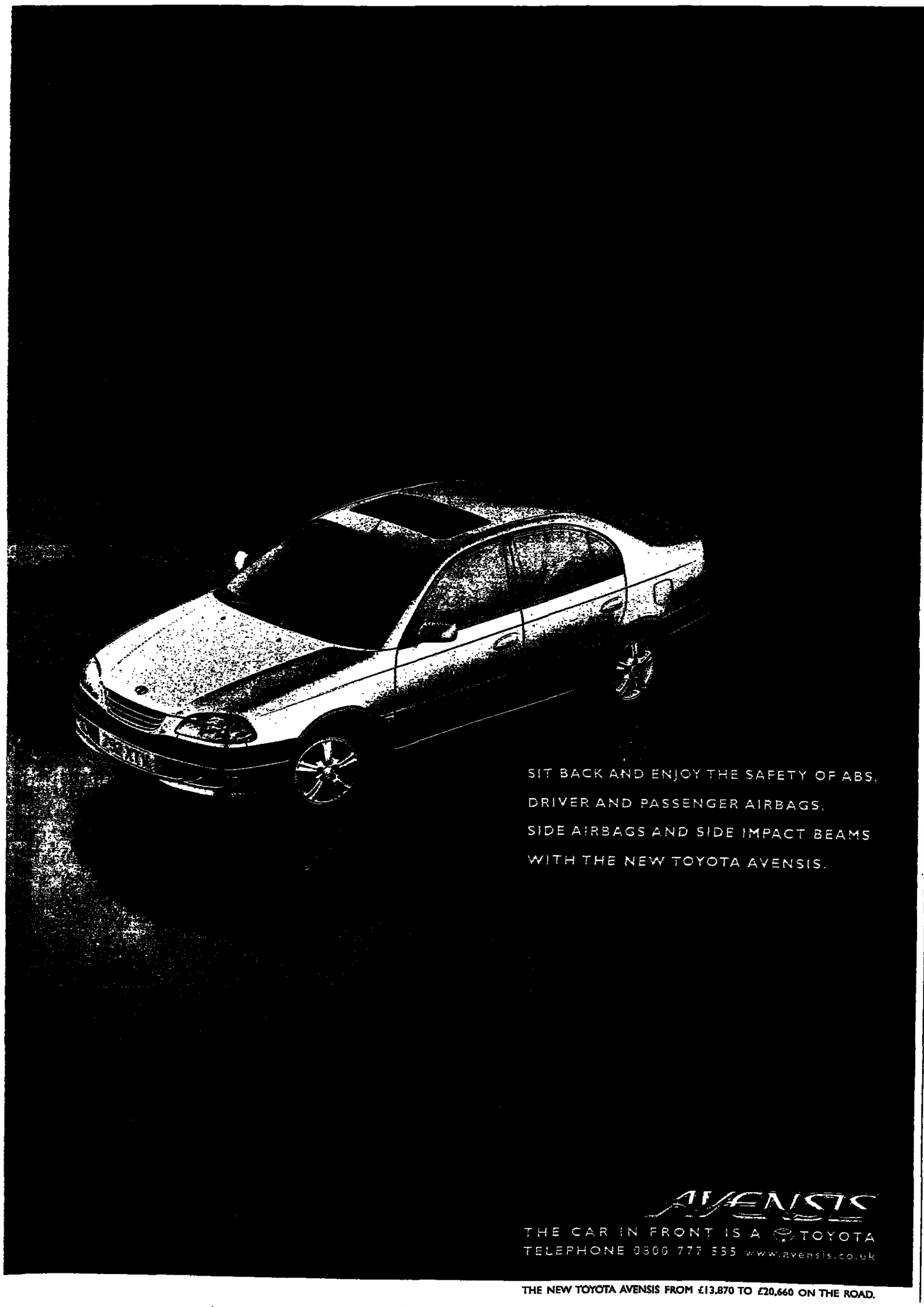
He said it had been a type of "proto-parliament" that could provide important lessons for the assembly to be elected in June if there was a "Yes" vote in the May referendum. "I think the legacy of the forum is that we had something like 90 people here for nearly two years being educated in public dialogue."

Despite the "odd spat", there had been a "wonderful harmony", he said. But he admitted he was disappointed that the SDLP and Sinn Fein had not been present.

Meeting in a former department store, the forum had 71 sessions and produced 32 reports on a variety of issues. In the final report, *The Activities and Achievements of the Forum*, Mr Gorman said: "During its 22-month history, the forum was at times maligned and often ignored. It was not, as most people would acknowledge, the main game in town," but it "achieved much during its brief life".

The Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists, said nationalists had tried to bring down the forum by boycotting it. "The forum has outridden the storm and made a remarkable contribution to every facet of life in Northern Ireland," he said.

Lord Dubs, a junior Northern Ireland minister, attended the final meeting yesterday and thanked the forum for its "honest endeavour" and "valuable work".



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When the fawning and Flora had to stop

Daniel McGrory and Dominic Kennedy chart earl's loss of faith in his sister's memorial charity



The trustees of the fund include, from left to right, Baroness Pitkeathley, Anthony Julius, Lady Sarah McCorquodale, Michael Gibbins and Vivienne Parry

WHEN Earl Spencer discovered tubs of margarine on a supermarket shelf emblazoned with his sister's distinctive looping signature, he resolved to do all he could to shut down the charity started in her name.

His distaste for the way the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund was trading on the public affection for his sister had already embroiled him in arguments with some of the charity's leading figures.

The appearance of Diana low-fat spread was for him the final indignation. Until then his sister, Lady Sarah McCorquodale, had persuaded him to avoid public disputes with the fund, which has collected £41 million so far but has given less than £7 million to charities.

The trustees argued that the Princess would not have minded autographing tubs of marg in return for the £1.25 million cheque that Flora has pledged from tomorrow's London Marathon.

One close aide said: "I have never seen him so angry. This was precisely what he feared the fund would do and why it should not be raising money, simply giving away the millions that it had already received."

The earl is concerned that trustees and employees of the fund are prolonging its life by encouraging ever more moneymaking enterprises. His staff admit that they are reluctant to tell him about the latest "Diana deal", recalling how he "exploded with rage" at the launch of lottery scratchcards in her name. He consulted his lawyer about how to stop ideas that the fund was reported to have received, including English Rose lager, a brand of dog food and a Diana doll.

The trustees, who admitted to a lapse of judgment over the margarine, have suspended further endorsements until they draw up rules on what products are suitable. They have rejected requests for a Diana manure and rose-coloured carpets with her signature.

The earl claims credit for starting the fund. On the eve of the funeral in September, he begged the public to stop leaving flowers outside the Royal Palaces and to give the money to a charity in his sister's name. He says now that a nightmare was born.

He is convinced that as the charity grows so the mistakes and controversies will multiply, blighting his sister's memory. "Above all, the fund must give away the money it has got, not leave it piling up the interest in banks," he told a close aide.

The fund is promised £100 million by the end of the year. It is offering £5 million to 95 small charities if they propose worthy ways to spend what many describe as a "pitiful" amount.

This week staff move to another temporary headquarters, one floor up from the Labour Party in Millbank Tower, Central London. Their eight-month stay at the offices of the Princess's divorce lawyers, Mishcon de Reya, which handled the 200 requests a week for merchandising rights, left the fund with a £500,000 bill.

The fund's final destination, 6,000 sq ft of County Hall, with 15 first-floor rooms overlooking the Thames, is being given rent-free by the Shirayama Shokusan property development corporation. Unfortunately, its European head, Mac Okamoto, has been embroiled in an industrial tribunal which was told that he described Diana as "that big-nosed Princess". The fund has taken a lease until 2018.

It took four months to appoint the fund's nine trustees, by which time the Princess's butler, Paul Burrell, had set up the Flora deal. He has become the chief fundraiser, earning £50,000 a year.

The fund agonised for seven months over who should receive the first handouts and then decided on the so-called Kensington Six — the charities that the Princess had maintained links with after her divorce. Each got less than £1 million. Landmine victims had to get something as that was the Princess's greatest cause at the time of her death, but the trustees could not decide which charity to choose and so have called a conference to let bidders squabble over who gets the £1 million.

The earl has support in the Commons. Ann Widdecombe, the former Tory minister, called the merchandising "trashy and naff". Sir Teddy Taylor, a fellow Conservative MP, said: "Quite frankly, the fund has raised enough money. It's about time they distributed the cash and called it a day."

The fund has 13 fulltime staff. The rest are volunteers who handle more than 2,000 calls a week. The trustees are also unpaid. The £75,000 salary of the chief executive, Andrew Purkis, has been criticised for being too high. Mr Purkis, former deputy chief of staff to the Archbishop of Canterbury, will take up the post in June.

Vivienne Parry, a trustee, said "The earl is being naive if he thinks the fund can stop. Money pours in every day without us looking for it. Surely we need an organised group to make sure it's spent properly."

She said that the trustees were planning an "awayday" together to debate the charity's future, including the question of its lifespan. If the charity disappeared, she said, there would still be Diana souvenirs but no money from their sale would go to good causes.

Leading article, page 23

The nine entrusted with fund role

THE trustees of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund are:

Anthony Julius: the Princess's divorce lawyer. Driving force behind Mishcon de Reya, which in January sent the charity a £500,000 bill for 11 weeks' work setting up commercial operations and the fund. This incorporated a 20 per cent discount. He worked for free.

Michael Gibbins: comptroller and private secretary to the Princess, ran her household from 1996. Honorary treasurer to the fund. Former senior partner with accountants KPMG.

Lady Sarah McCorquodale: Princess's ana's eldest sister, who became her extra lady-in-waiting. Lives on farm in Grantham, Lincolnshire, with husband, Neil.

Christopher Spence: director of the National Centre for Volunteering. President of London Lighthouse, Europe's largest residential and support centre for people with Aids, and chair of the HIV Project.

John Reizenstein: corporate financier and managing director of SBC Warburg Dillon Read, governor of the Royal Academy of Music and patron of Hemi-Help for families with children suffering from hemiplegia.

Vivienne Parry: writer and broadcaster pursuing a career in television. Former national organiser of the mother and baby research charity Birthright, of which the Princess was patron.

Nalini Varma: deputy chief executive of RPS Rainer, a national charity concerned with the welfare of young people at risk, qualified social worker, member of UK Grants Committee, trustee of Comic Relief.

Baroness Pitkeathley of Caversham: a leading spokesperson on carers' issues. Chief executive of the Carers National Association and a campaigner for disadvantaged people.

John Eversley: senior research fellow at Public Policy Research Unit, Queen Mary and Westfield College, London University. Worked for 20 years in the voluntary sector, health service, for trade unions and in local government.



Model boat sailors try to sink fountain

By Nicholas Wood and Marcus Binney

PLANS to commemorate the life of Diana, Princess of Wales, with a spectacular fountain in Kensington Gardens are being threatened by model boat enthusiasts.

For more than 100 years the Model Yacht Sailing Club has exercised its fleet of small boats on the Round Pond behind the former home of the Princess of Wales. But now its Sunday morning outings could be swamped by a scheme for a 300ft fountain in the centre of the eight-acre pond.

Commodore Robin Redhead, who runs the sailing club which has 40 members, said he was appalled. "It would be extraordinary to stop the model boating as it is part of the London scene." He has sailed craft there for 60 years. Many enthusiasts today use boats with remote control. Sir William Whitfield, the architect and former surveyor of St Paul's Cathedral, proposed the fountain to the agencies responsible for drawing up outline plans for the garden.

He said: "I had the idea of a fountain many years ago, but the time never seemed right. The Round Pond isn't a place for sailing model boats. It's a major feature of the original early 18th-century layout.

Diana's fountain
Weekend, page 3

"One really large fountain would command all the vistas converging on the pond. It would be visible above the trees from Hyde Park Corner."

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, said that a scheme for a garden had been submitted to the memorial committee chaired by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor.

The decision to site the main feature of the garden behind Kensington Palace should alleviate some of the concerns of local residents, who fear the prospect of up to five million visitors a year flooding in from the crowded pavements of Kensington Gore to the south of the palace.

The proposed fountain would have a plume higher than the Emperor fountain at Chatsworth and would create a single hollow jet 14cm wide. It would cost £133,000 to construct and the running costs of the pump would be £200,000 a year if working all the time.

However, this is thought unlikely — which may offer the model boat enthusiasts a partial reprieve.

Mystery over missing Tiger Moth pilot grows

By Kathryn Knight, Stephen Farrell and Susan Bell

MYSTERY surrounding the disappearance of Tiger Moth pilot Roger Fiennes deepened yesterday amid confusion over his plans before his last flight across the English Channel.

His cousin, the explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes, said the failure to find any trace of him or the aircraft meant a "Lord Lucan-style disappearance" could not be ruled out, but he believed it unlikely.

Friends also insisted that, although Mr Fiennes, 54, a property developer, saw three businesses dissolved or go into liquidation in recent years, he had no reason to disappear.

He flew from Headcorn airfield in Kent to France on Sunday morning telling his wife, Rachel, and Chris Freeman, the airfield's owner, that he would return the next day. But an investigation has established that he set out to fly back the same afternoon. Fellow pilots were surprised that he set out from Dieppe without calling ahead to check the weather and had filed a flight plan but not activated it.

Mr Freeman said: "He'd flown back and forth across the Channel more times than I can remember and he always obeyed protocol. I'm puzzled."

But Sir Ranulph said last night that he feared the simple explanation was the most likely — that Mr Fiennes had crashed into the Channel. He knew of no business or personal troubles that might lead his cousin to vanish.

Jonathan Elwes, a fellow Tiger Moth enthusiast with whom Mr Fiennes flew to Moscow in 1989, said: "I spoke to him two days before and I know that he was in extremely good humour and very, very well with the world."

Didier Ibled, the policeman in charge of the French investigation, confirmed yesterday that, after landing in Dieppe, Mr Fiennes had lunch alone in the town centre. His last transmission was at 2.42pm GMT, announcing that he had taken off and would be crossing the mid-point of the Channel at 3.17pm. "It was very cold. If he had a heart attack, he would not have had the time to call anyone and the plane would have gone down," M Ibled said.

Inspector David Withers, of Kent police, said foul play had been ruled out and the incident was being treated as a missing person inquiry. "We have found no wreckage or body. Until we do that, we have to consider all the possibilities."

Mrs Fiennes was at the couple's farmhouse in Leeds, Kent, last night, but refused to comment.



Fiennes: said to have been in good humour

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST



"Twelve months on, we may have a Northern Ireland agreement, but sleaze is back and grandiose PR stunts have taken the place of policy..."

Philip Norman on Blair's first year. The Sunday Times Magazine, tomorrow

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Green tea cream 'can prevent wrinkles'

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

WRINKLES on the forehead and crow's feet around the eyes can be prevented and even reduced by daily application of a cream containing vitamins, green tea and minerals, according to research promoted by a cosmetic firm and published yesterday.

The cream is claimed to counter the effects of ageing and of environmental factors, such as sunshine or tobacco smoke, that damage the skin.

The 18-month study involved 160 volunteer women, aged between 35 and 60, living in three climatically different regions of France. Half were given a cream containing antioxidant ingredients: the rest used an apparently identical cream with no antioxidants.

The women, from Tours, Grenoble and Toulouse, had the depth and number of their wrinkles and crow's feet assessed and counted by dermatologists before the trials began. They were then told to rub the cream on their face and left forearm every morning. Every six months, researchers from the universities in the three cities, led by Loic Vaillant, Professor of Dermatology at Tours University, measured their wrinkles.

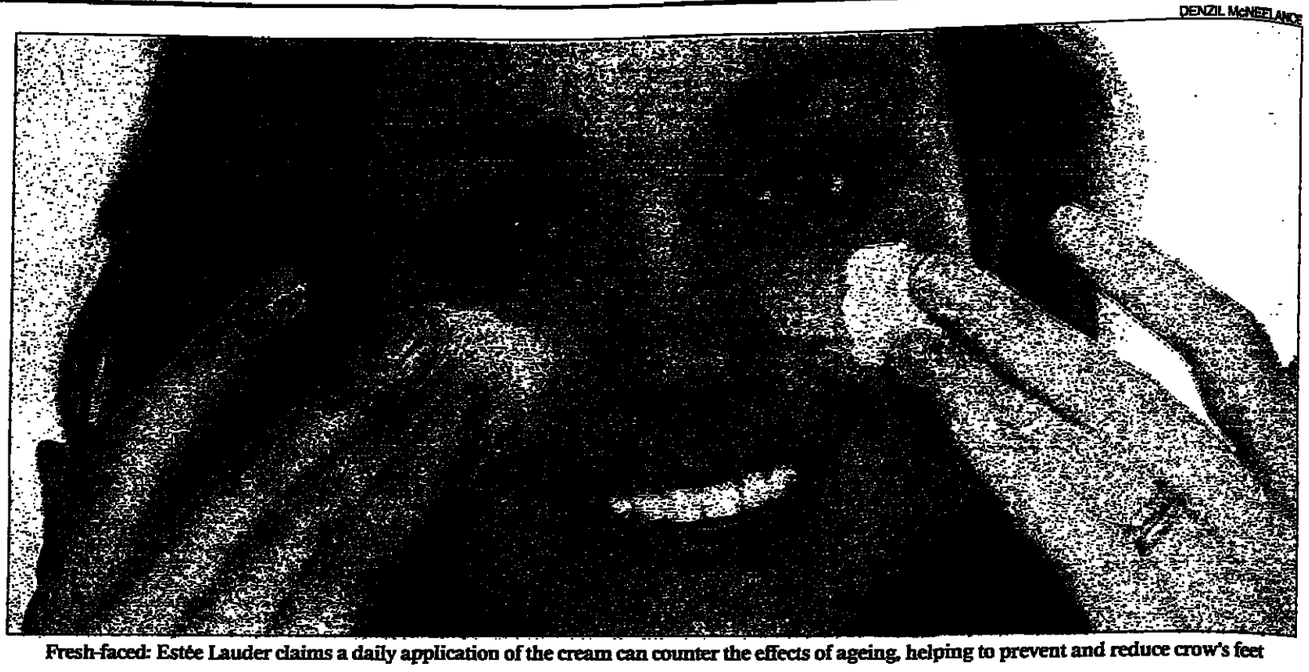
After 18 months the researchers carried out a series of tests to find out if there was any difference in the skin of those who had been given the antioxidant and those who had not. They discovered a significant improvement in many of those who had been using the special cream, Daniel Maes, vice-president of research and development at Estée Lauder laboratories, said.

The study showed a 23 per cent reduction in the formation of new lines and wrinkles, and an 8 per cent reduction in existing lines and wrinkles among women who were using the antioxidant cream, he said. "This surprised us, because although we hoped that there would be protection from the formation of new wrinkles, we had not expected there would be a decrease in those already there. The reason appears to be that if you protect the skin correctly, it is able to repair itself. If the vitamins are in the skin before it is attacked by something like strong sunlight, it is protected."

M Maes said that other tests showed that the cream also reduced the speed at which the skin became thinner with age. Suction tests found that the cream gave a 4 per cent protection against the loss of elasticity. Tests to find out if unprotected skin was drier proved inconclusive because the placebo cream contained so much moisturising agent.

The skin tests are part of an eight-year nutritional study involving 15,000 French men and women being conducted by an independent group of French scientists and dermatologists into the role of antioxidants (including vitamins C and E, beta carotene, zinc and selenium) in health promotion and the prevention of heart disease, cancer, cataracts and infections.

All those involved in the skin tests were independent, but the cream they used was supplied by Estée Lauder. The cream used in the trials will go on sale in July at £22.50 for a tube that will last up to six months.



DENZIL McNEELANCE

Fresh-faced: Estée Lauder claims a daily application of the cream can counter the effects of ageing, helping to prevent and reduce crow's feet

HOW TO SAVE FACE

Several skin creams now on the market list antioxidant vitamins and/or minerals among their ingredients.

Body Shop: Vitamin E Lotion (£1.15, 60ml):
Claims: a light, moisturising lotion, providing a source of Vitamin E to protect and condition the skin.

Nivea Visage: Anti-wrinkle Creme — hydro-repair complex with vitamins A & E (£5.25, 50ml).
Claims: offers high-performance moisturising and vitamin-active ingredients in order to smooth wrinkles and fine lines, helping to diminish the visible signs of ageing.

Aramis: A+ — multivitamin moisture cream for men (£22, 50ml).
Claims: delivers an immediate boost with six potent vitamins and antioxidants. Provides continuous 12-hour hydration.

Estée Lauder: DayWear — a super-antioxidant complex (£24, 50ml)
Claims: for all skin types. Shields skin from premature ageing, effects of pollution, smoke and UV light. Blend of antioxidants boosts skin's ability to protect itself.

Estée Lauder: Nutritious — bio-protein moisture complex (£30, 50ml).
Claims: Nutritious is like health food for skin. Fine lines are visibly smoothed. Antioxidants provide effective preventative care.



Bird tables turn into the killing fields

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE well-stocked garden bird table can be a killing field for tree sparrows, siskins, chaffinches and many other species, a scientist has found.

Tables and feeders laden with scraps, seeds and peanuts may produce a spectacular scene as colourful birds flock to feed. But they also create the perfect environment for the rapid transmission of deadly bugs, viruses and other infectious agents.

Some become so sickly they are easy prey for the household cat. Others may die from lung or liver disease.

James Kirkwood, the scientist behind the study, says in *Veterinary Record*, published today, that people must be made aware of the risks of overfeeding. "We may, in feeding wild birds, be influencing their lives and biology more than we think," says. Dr Kirkwood, formerly of the Institute of Zoology, who is now scientific director of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare in Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire.

James Maxwell, of CJ WildBird Foods in Shrewsbury, Shropshire, said yesterday that business had been growing at 30 per cent a year. The firm supplies the feed range for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Ornithologists argue that, as natural habitats and foods have been reduced by development and agriculture, the nation's gardens are vital in helping to sustain wild bird numbers. The RSPB recommends year-round feeding.

But some scientists are concerned at the spread of infectious diseases from large numbers of birds congregating in small areas and the impact that is having on populations and the general health of wild birds.

The new study offers the first firm evidence to support these fears. Sixty cases in which people reported bird deaths in their garden were studied. Dr Kirkwood found that, in 18 deaths where daily food provision was a pint or less, 55 per cent were due to infectious diseases. But in the 42 incidents where the estimated daily provision was a pint or more, up to 95 per cent died from infectious disease.

Dr Kirkwood said he would not want the research to deter people from feeding birds, but "birds can have too much of a good thing".

People with large gardens may be able to put out many pints of food if they spread it well. Those with small plots should, however, be mean to be kind to reduce the number of birds feeding.

Bird tables and feeders should also be moved around the garden and cleaned regularly and water changed daily.

Avoid feeders on which food particles and droppings can collect. Dr Kirkwood said people should always wear rubber gloves when cleaning.

Golf club shoots intruding geese

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

TWO Canada geese have been shot on the orders of a golf club. Players had complained that they were littering fairways with their droppings, but an official of the club in Surrey's stockbroker belt said that the action had been taken to protect two disabled swans adopted by the club.

Bryan Frost, vice-captain of Windlesham Golf Club, said: "The geese were shot last Saturday morning on the orders of the club committee. There was a thorough discussion of the problem before this decision was taken. A licensed firearms expert was persuaded to do the deed."

Mr Frost, a 60-year-old company director, accepted that laws may have been broken, but said the club had to protect the swans, towards which members had a fiercely protective attitude. "It was terribly distressing to see them being physically assaulted so violently."

Chris Harbard, of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said last night: "I think it's a great shame such final action was taken, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act forbids it. There were numerous less destructive measures that could have been taken."

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2020: woman the hunter, man the househusband

BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

ONE in five fathers will be househusbands while their partners become the breadwinners, working five hours a day, a report on life in 2020 forecast yesterday.

Twenty years into the millennium, a new age of altruism will dawn and people will spend one day a week working in the community. Growing numbers will choose to live alongside those with shared interests, for example in golf villages, or in households spanning three generations. Life expectancy will be in the mid-80s and the working week will shrink to 25 hours because of "technology-inspired productivity gains".

The future seems bright, according to the *2020 Vision* report from the Henley Centre, a leading consumer consultancy, commissioned by Barclays Life.

Graeme Leach, assistant director of the centre, said: "There have been all sorts of predictions that everyone will have their own personal helicopter by 2000, but many of those forecasts were based on wild guesses. We have looked at the beginnings of new developments."

The report says the power of computers and the influence of the Internet will lead to all manner of social and economic developments:

☐ virtual glasses with wireless digital video will enable people to talk to and see anybody anywhere in the world;

☐ many couples will have met online and spoken over video links;

☐ weekend breaks will be possible anywhere. The longest journey will take two hours: by space shuttle to Sydney;

☐ One in five lessons for schoolchildren will be online, often provided on screen by a superteacher from another country;

☐ the nature of political debate will change because of referendums conducted on the Internet. Arguments over the single European currency will have been superceded by the call for a global online currency.

Some things will not change. The basic family unit of two adults and two children will be reinforced by social and economic developments, despite the Government's forecast of a big rise in single-person households.

Mr Leach said that most of the technological changes would be enjoyed by at least half of British households. "The downside in a weak economic growth scenario would mean fewer jobs and a growing gap between haves and have-nots."

He added: "The unskilled will have the biggest problems, because they will face growing competition for their jobs from overseas. It is not all rosy for the middle class, because, although they will get continued income growth, lots of money will be syphoned off for 'personal privatisation', spending on health, education and pension plans."

TEN TERMS FOR 2020

Superclass: a global elite with very high incomes.
Friction-free capitalism: commerce made easier and cheaper by the Internet.
Knowbots: intelligent computers filtering out unwanted e-mail.
Walton family household: multi-generational homes.
Gated communities: secure housing projects giving protection against crime.
Lifestyle communities: housing based on shared interests, *such as golf villages.*
Misery gap: the difference between pensions and the money needed for a comfortable retirement.
Contingent workforce: the majority of workers on short-term contracts.
Cyber schools: home or classroom-based online lessons.
Personal privatisation: increased responsibility for pensions, health and education costs.

Footballer tackles his toughest challenge

BY A CORRESPONDENT

TOMMY SMITH, the former Liverpool captain, was known as the Iron Man of Anfield. One of the hardest players in football, he never ducked a tackle and crowned a memorable career by scoring in the 1977 European Cup Final.

Now he faces his toughest challenge — to lead his daughter Janette down the aisle next month despite suffering three hairline fractures to his spine and breaking his collar bones and eight ribs in a motorway accident three weeks ago.

To help Smith to recuperate, a metal frame has been screwed to his head. "The wedding car may need an open top to allow this contraption to stick out," he said after being released from the spinal unit at Southport General Hospital, "but I'm determined that the wedding will go ahead." His daughter is to marry on May 23. "My wife Sue and my children Janette and Darren have been a tower of strength," Smith said.

EDDIE BARFORD



Tommy Smith must wear the head brace to help his damaged spine to heal

Lawyer in E coli inquiry hit by food poisoning

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE inquiry into the Scottish *E. coli* 0157 outbreak was interrupted yesterday after the lawyer acting for the butcher John Barr was laid low by suspected food poisoning.

John Thomson was due to cross-examine a key witness at the fatal accident inquiry in Motherwell yesterday, but rang colleagues during the night to say he could not attend. He blamed "something he had eaten" but details have not been disclosed.

The inquiry is investigating the 1996 food poisoning outbreak, linked to Mr Barr's shop, which claimed 21 lives and affected more than 400 people.

Yesterday's setback was the second in 24 hours to hit the butcher. On Thursday night Mr Barr was ordered by council safety officers to shut his shop in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, indefinitely, amid concerns that it was collapsing. Cracks appeared in the walls and ceilings a week ago. Yesterday parts of a ceiling were crumbling.

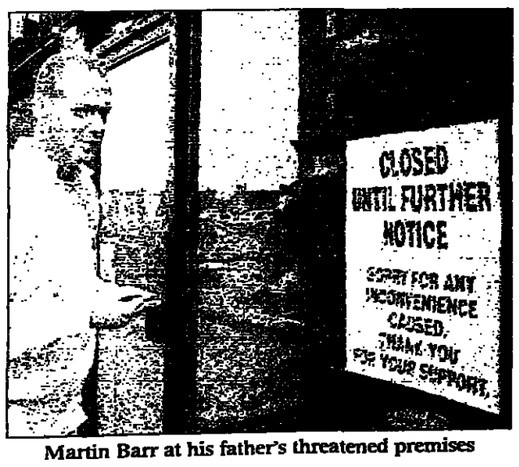
British Coal engineers carried out structural tests at the shop and two neighbouring businesses in the 100-year-old row yesterday. Subsidence from uncharted Victorian mine workings is suspected. North Lanarkshire Council said the building may have to be demolished.

Mr Barr said: "I cannot believe this latest bad luck. At the moment I've told my 20 employees to take indefinite, unpaid leave. I just do not know when the shop will open up again. Both the staff and I are stunned by these latest developments."

Mr Barr voluntarily closed the business in November 1996 after the food poisoning outbreak and did not reopen until February 1997.

At Hamilton Sheriff Court in January this year the butcher was fined £2,250 after pleading guilty to breaches of food hygiene and safety laws. The fatal accident inquiry heard yesterday from Syed Ahmed, who was public health consultant for Lanarkshire Heath Board at the time of the outbreak. He said that fewer than 100 of the *E. coli* organisms could produce infection in a human. In salmonella cases, hundreds of thousands of organisms were required to cause infection.

The hearing is expected to last up to three months.



Martin Barr at his father's threatened premises

Child smokers get lesson in health

BY PAUL WILKINSON

CHILDREN as young as 11 are to be taught how to stop smoking after asking teachers for help.

Karen Robinson, a school nurse trained in "chain-breaking", is co-ordinating the scheme at Longfield School in Darlington, Co Durham. Teachers at the school, which has already banned smoking for staff from the head to the cleaners, have also been invited to join her sessions. She said: "They can act as the perfect role model to encourage their pupils to quit."

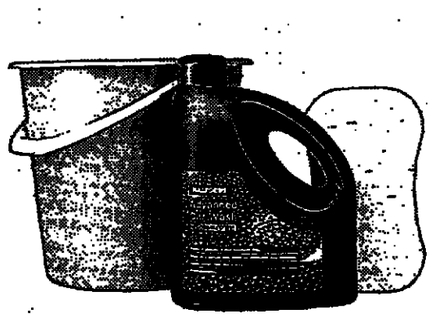
Melanie Stubbs, the teacher responsible for the health education of the 900 pupils at the comprehensive, said that they had targeted those aged between 11 and 14. "There is no point in pretending children do not smoke."

She said that 11 pupils had admitted they were smokers and needed help. "The children didn't necessarily smoke at school, but at night with their friends, and they were quite concerned about it."

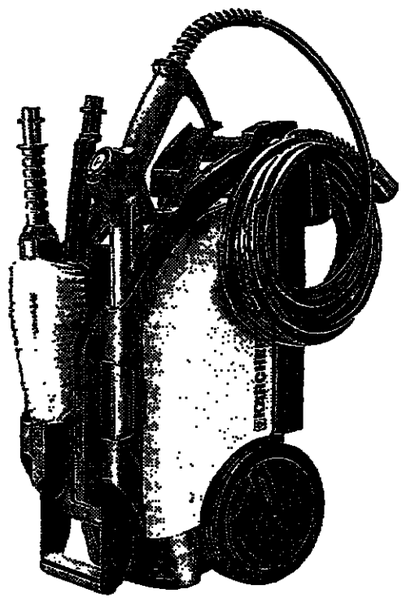
The first session takes place on Friday. She said: "In a lot of schools children might not admit they smoke, but we are offering support, not clamping down on them. It was the children who smoke who raised the idea of getting help to give up the habit before it was too late for them and their health began to suffer."

The school has won the South West Durham Healthy School Awards three years running and the latest initiative has been welcomed by Ash, the national anti-smoking pressure group. Clive Bates, the national director, said the children were "very smart" to seek help from professionals at the school, which had taken a very mature approach to the problem.

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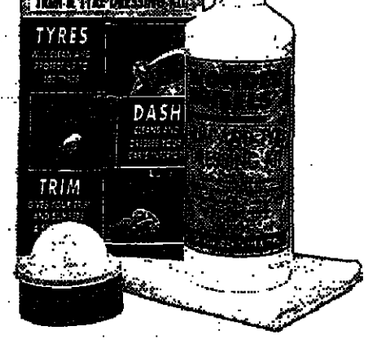
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Prescott defends car fleet for EU transport meeting

Deputy PM says rail services were just not good enough for European ministers. **Arthur Leathley** reports

JOHN PRESCOTT yesterday defended his officials' decision to take European ministers to a transport conference by road rather than by rail.

The Deputy Prime Minister spoke out amid controversy over the decision by his department to lay on 60 cars at Manchester airport to take more than 250 ministers, partners and officials to Chester 30 miles away. He said officials had told him the hourly train service from the airport had taken three hours and added that the final leg of his own journey to Chester from London had been of a poor standard.

However, as Mr Prescott remained adamant that the service was inadequate, the train company insisted that journeys took barely an hour, with a single change at Crewe.

Mr Prescott said that he had caught a local service for the final leg of the journey from Crewe station, which his officials have criticised for being in a dilapidated condition. "When I got the train from Crewe people were standing up, they couldn't get their luggage on the seats and it was not the best way to advertise the rail system."

He said that the decision not to use rail services had been made after an official had checked the service from Manchester airport. "If you come into Manchester airport you would have to go to Manchester station, then change at Crewe. One of our team did it, and it took three hours. We have got to improve connections and encourage people to use the train a lot more." However Mr Prescott



Prescott: "not best way to advertise railways"

was insistent that the issue of ministers' travel arrangements to the conference should not dominate the opening of the first joint environment and transport council to be staged by the EU.

The Deputy Prime Minister said: "We have a lot of very important issues to discuss this weekend about the future and the way that we change people's attitudes to transport and the environment." Mr Prescott said he had deliberately chosen Chester, where he was brought up, because it enabled those at the conference to walk everywhere, without using cars.

The highlight of the conference will be an exhibition of 18 "green" cars that do not rely on petrol power but are driven by a range of alternative fuels, including electricity, gas and solar power.

Mr Prescott is also to unveil his newly-converted Jaguar car which has been altered to dual fuel, taking both gas and petrol.

As ministers arrived for the conference yesterday afternoon, Mr Prescott and Neil Kinnock, the European Commission transport commissioner, launched a campaign to encourage greater use of back seat safetybelts in cars. At present just under half of adults wear rear seatbelts, but it is estimated that one-third of the 1,800 vehicle occupants killed on UK roads each year could be saved if they used their seatbelts and ensured that head restraints were in the correct position.

Farewell to 'flesh and blood' politician

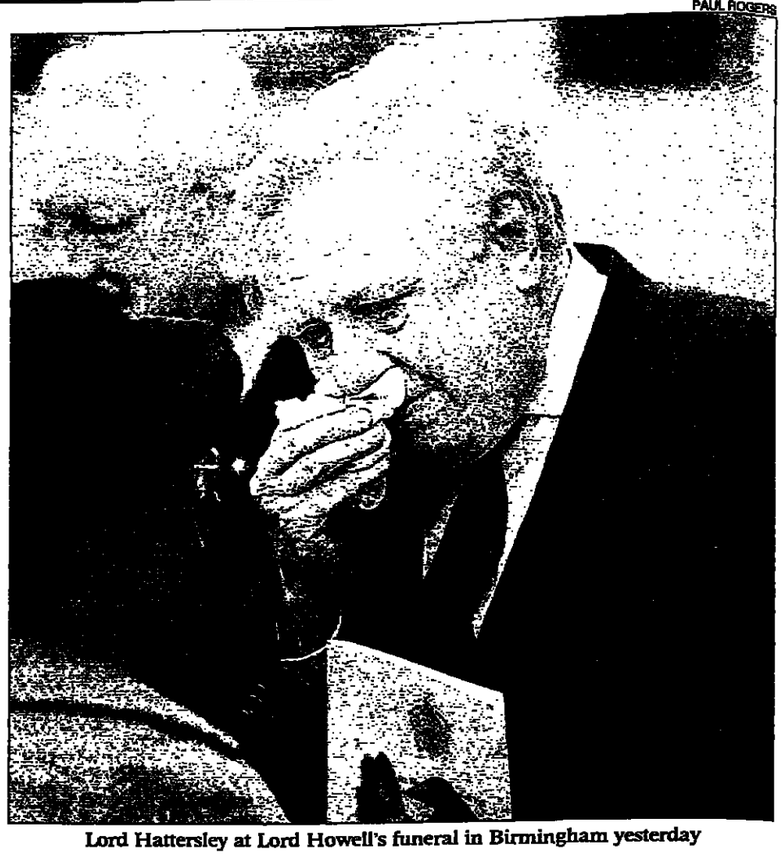
BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE former Sports Minister Lord Howell was described as a man "who never forgot the class from which he came" at his funeral service in his home city yesterday. Lord Hattersley told mourners that the veteran Labour parliamentarian — who died aged 74 last weekend — — remained "real flesh and blood" in an age of homogenised politicians.

Addressing hundreds of mourners during a 70-minute service at St Paul's Church in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, Lord Hattersley added: "We think of him now as the Minister for Sport and the Rainmaker of 1976 who ended the drought when the reservoirs and rivers were about to run dry.

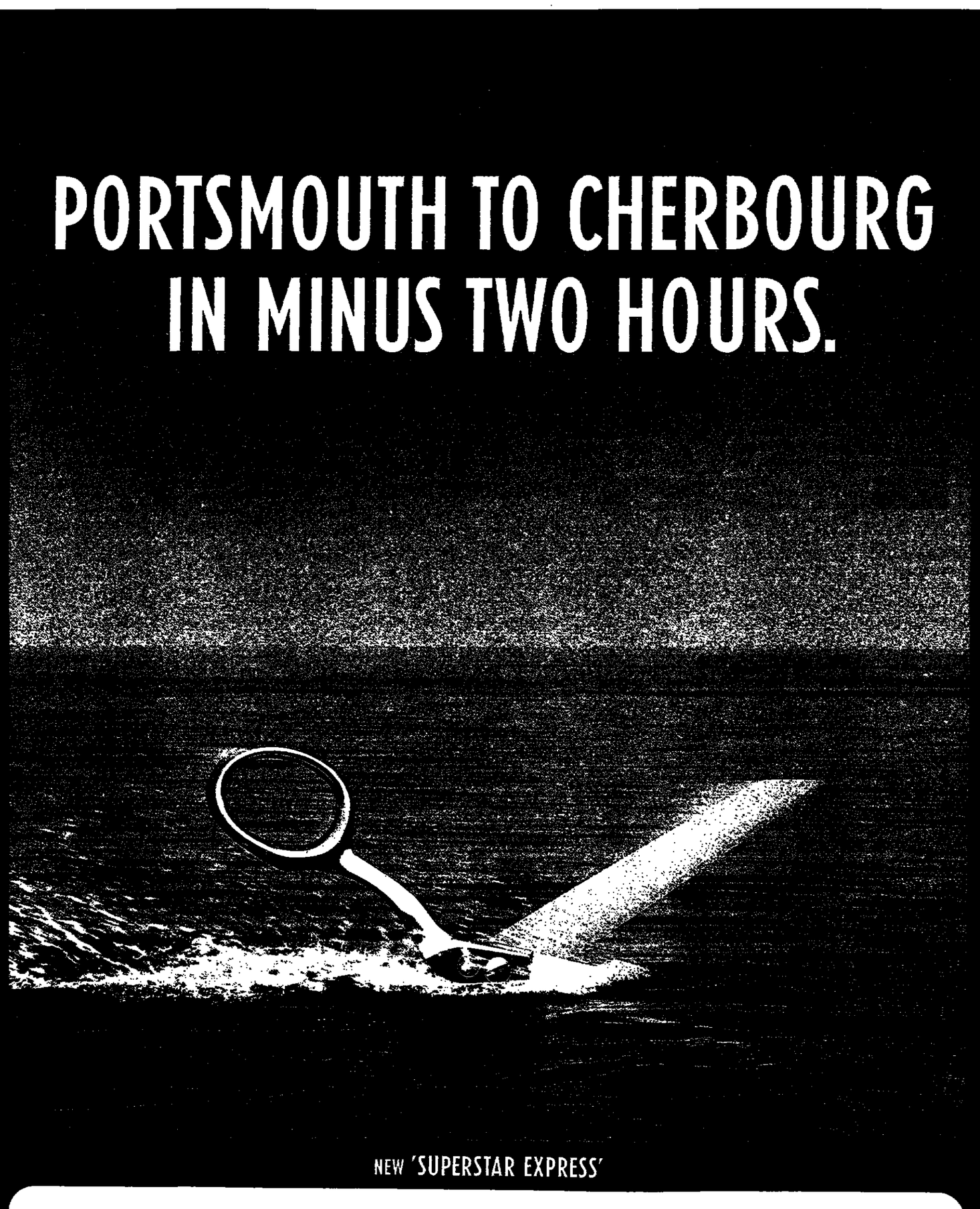
"But today we ought to give thanks to him as a man of wide and profound political belief — he never doubted which side he was on and never forgot the class from which he came."

PAUL ROGERS



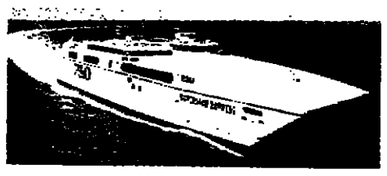
Lord Hattersley at Lord Howell's funeral in Birmingham yesterday

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Lobbyist aids Lib Dems over press pricing

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A LIBERAL Democrat campaign to stop "predatory pricing" by newspaper groups backfired last night when it emerged that evidence to support the party's case was provided by a lobbyist working for *The Independent*.

Labour accused Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, of "siding with one newspaper group against another" and challenged his party to explain its tactics.

Mr Ashdown released a letter on Thursday from Tony Lane and noted that he was a civil servant and former deputy director of the Office of Fair Trading. The letter was used to argue that the Government's refusal to legislate against predatory pricing by newspapers was wrong. Next month, Liberal Democrats will try to amend the Competition Bill to stop newspapers reducing their cover price in an attempt to drive rivals out of business. The move is an attempt to stop *The Times*'s pricing policy.

But yesterday it was disclosed that Mr Lane's letter was addressed to Evie Soames, who works for Charles Barker, a lobbying group, and who heads the public affairs account for *The Independent*.

It emerged later that Mr Lane, who worked for the Office of Fair Trading in the later 1980s, is a consultant who works for a number of public affairs companies, including Westminster Strategy and Charles Barker.

Mrs Soames commissioned Mr Lane to find out more about the prospects of amending the Competition Bill to rule out predatory pricing. An amendment was tabled by the the Liberal Democrats which was successfully carried in the Lords in February, but there has been concern that the amendment is not watertight.

Mr Lane's letter suggested that the Liberal Democrats should press on with their amendment on May 5. It emerged last night that Charles Barker is also acting on behalf of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*.

Last night a senior Labour source said the Liberal Democrats "claim to be making an objective criticism of the Government, when in fact it seems they are trying to take the side of one newspaper group against another." The Liberal Democrats denied that they were siding with one paper.

Jane Reed, Director of Corporate Affairs for News International, which owns Times Newspapers Holdings, said: "Everybody should be aware that this story is simply another shot in the campaign by our rivals to raise newspaper prices. Tony Lane, the ex-OFT official who wrote the letter, worked for Gordon Borrie, a former Director General of the OFT. Lord Borrie is now a director of Mirror Group Newspapers, co-owners of *The Independent* until earlier this year."

Blair 'too close' to Murdoch

BY JAMES LANDALE

THE Prime Minister was accused of having "an incestuous relationship" with Rupert Murdoch by a Liberal Democrat MP yesterday.

Norman Baker, MP for Lewes, accused Mr Blair of being "in bed" with Mr Murdoch, the chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, during a short debate in the Commons.

He cited Mr Blair's recent telephone conversation with Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, during which Mr Murdoch's business interests were raised. He pointed out that Tim Allen, one of Mr Blair's senior press officers, had just resigned to join BSkyB, which is partly owned by News International, the subsidiary of The News Corporation that owns Times Newspapers. He also claimed News International paid a "paltry" tax bill.

Peter Kilfoyle, the Public Services Minister, rejected Mr Baker's claims and added: "I have to say to you that Mr Rupert Murdoch is not treated differently to anybody else."

Mandelson rubs salt into 'pact' wound

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

PETER MANDELSON yesterday sought to reopen divisions within the Liberal Democrats over the party's growing links with Labour. The Minister without Portfolio said Paddy Ashdown's attacks on the Government were "synthetic" and simply designed to placate dissidents in his party opposed to further co-operation.

He praised the Liberal Democrat leader for his private support for the Government, which he contrasted to his party's "irresponsibility and irrelevance" at local level. Mr Ashdown is facing growing opposition within his party to his policy of "constructive opposition" towards the Government.

Mr Mandelson's remarks were a clear attempt to widen the divisions before the May local elections.

Many town halls are a straight battle between the Liberal Democrats and Labour. Some Liberal Democrat councillors, MPs and peers fear the parties' co-operation at a national level is preventing them campaigning effectively against Labour.

Mr Mandelson described Charles Kennedy, the Liberal Democrat rural affairs spokesman, as one of the leading dissidents after the MP said this week that the party was "pulling too many punches" against Labour.

A Liberal Democrat spokesman said: "They are scared of the Liberal Democrat challenge in local elections."

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POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Letters cast light on heroic failure

Discovery of historic archive shows long campaign by Light Brigade commander to escape blame, says Michael Evans

A bundle of newly discovered letters by some of the officers involved in the Charge of the Light Brigade shows a long-running obsession by the Earl of Cardigan, the "hero" of the disaster, to escape any of the blame.

Right up to his death in 1868, Cardigan, commander of the brigade that charged the Russian guns at Balaclava on October 25, 1854, was writing letters to an official historian researching the Crimean War, to try further to blacken the name of the Earl of Lucan, commander of the cavalry division in Crimea, who passed on the disastrous order and was principally blamed for the tragedy.

The fascinating letters, still in good condition but difficult to read, have been found in the archives of a small regimental museum in Lancashire, where they have been lying unnoticed for about 100 years. They provide further insight into the personal feud between Cardigan, Lucan and Lord Raglan, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in Crimea, over the exchange of orders leading to the charge that, within 20 minutes, decimated the Light Brigade.

All the letters were written during lengthy correspondence between Cardigan and others, and Alexander Kinglake, an historian who had been asked by Raglan's widow to write a history putting the record straight about her late husband, who had supposedly died of a broken heart after losing so many men at Balaclava.

The letters reveal an intense battle between the protagonists, particularly Cardigan, to ensure that their own versions of the event was properly enshrined in Kinglake's history. Cardigan and Lucan, although brothers-in-law, were rivals who hated each other. Cardigan was regarded as the hero of the charge, for bravely facing up to the Russian battery, while Lucan was blamed for misunderstanding the orders from Raglan.

However, the Kinglake history was expected to cast doubt on Cardigan's judgment. Tennyson's celebrated poem highlighted the drama and courage of the 600, but the letters emphasise only the bitterness that followed.

The 156 letters, 58 written by Cardigan, were found in boxes at the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers' Lancashire region museum in Bury. Yesterday Saul David, an historian and author of *The Homicidal Earl, The Life of Lord Cardigan*, published last year, said he had not been aware that Cardigan had written so many letters. He said: "Cardigan knew that Kinglake was going to be critical about him, questioning why he continued riding towards the guns instead of turning back, so he did everything he could to blacken Lucan's name. The fact that he wrote so many letters to Kinglake shows how obsessive he was."

Cardigan's fears were justified. Kinglake's history was indeed critical and, in later years, Cardigan's glory faded while Lucan's gradually increased. Lucan, who died in 1888, ended his career as a field marshal.

The letters include a copy of the first order from Raglan, signed by Major-General Sir Richard Airey, his Quartermaster-General, which was handed to Lucan. It read: "Cavalry to advance and take advantage of any opportunity to recover the heights, they will be supported by infantry which have been ordered to advance on two fronts." In a note attached to the order, General Airey, one of Lucan's critics, wrote: "This copy was furnished to me by Lord Lucan, so that he had received the order, but for some reason was not acted upon."

It was a second order, urging Lucan to take immediate action against the Russian guns, that led to the fatal error. In a letter dated November 22, 1865, Cardigan wrote to Kinglake that Lucan had wrongly informed him about "an important feature of the Light Calvary charge". Cardigan wrote: "I can now inform you that I have proved my statement to be correct."

Today the regimental council will meet to decide whether to sell the letters or put them in a new museum to be opened in 2000. It appears likely that they will be offered for auction.



THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

The Charge of the Light Brigade was one of the great military disasters of British history. Letters showing the recriminations that followed have been found in a regimental museum in Bury, right

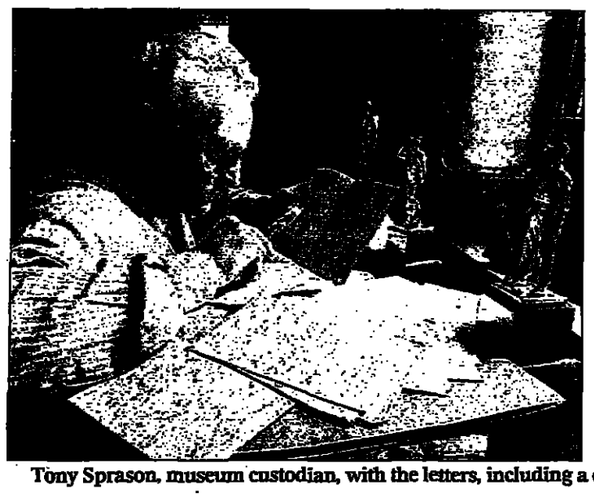
Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

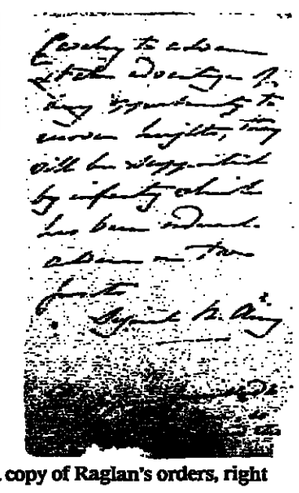
'Forward the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd.

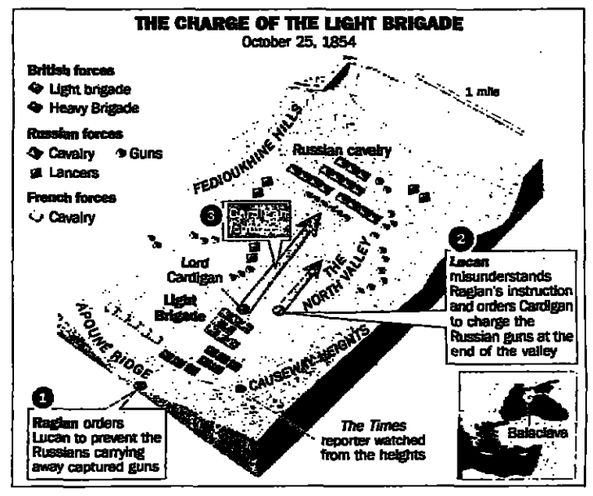
ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON 1809-1892







Tony Sprason, museum custodian, with the letters, including a copy of Raglan's orders, right



LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

THE

ATTACK ON BALAKLAVA.

(OF SUBMARINE AND SUBSEQUENT TELEGRAPH.)

We have received from our correspondent at Marseilles the following despatch, which had reached that port by the French post steamer which left Constantinople on the 30th ult:—

"Your correspondent in the army before Sebastopol writes on the 26th that 607 light infantry were engaged in the affair of the 25th, and that only 198 returned.

"Eight hundred cavalry were engaged, of whom only 200 returned.

"Nine officers were killed, 21 wounded, and 4 were missing.

"The 17th Lancers were almost destroyed.

"We require reinforcements."

The *Times* report of the catastrophe at Balaclava

LORDS OF MISFORTUNE



LORD RAGLAN
Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Old warhorse wounded at Waterloo while standing close to Wellington, thereafter commanded a desk until start of Crimean campaign. Blamed Lucan for loss of Light Brigade, but himself made scapegoat for subsequent bungled attacks on Malakhoff and Redan in June 1855. Died of dysentery and disappointment ten days later.



LORD LUCAN
Third Earl, Irish peer and sometime MP for Mayo. Divisional commander of cavalry at Balaclava who gave the wrong order to the Light Brigade. Earlier in the day commanded charge of the Heavy Brigade with much greater success. Censured by Raglan and recalled to England, but rescued his reputation, being knighted and eventually promoted to Field Marshal.



LORD CARDIGAN
Seventh Earl, sometime MP for Marlborough who bought himself a commission as Lieutenant-Colonel. Commanded the light cavalry brigade. Ill-tempered, domineering, constantly at odds with fellow officers and hated sharing his men's privations. But accepted fateful order without question, destroying brigade. Later promoted to Lieutenant-General.

How victory turned to tragedy

BY ALAN HAMILTON

The day had begun well. The 93rd Highlanders had destroyed with disciplined rifle fire a concerted Russian cavalry charge aimed at driving the British from their base at Balaclava while the main force was engaged in the siege of Sebastopol six miles away.

After the Highlanders, the Scots Greys, Enniskillens and elements of the Heavy Brigade charged the Russians to drive them out. The day appeared comfortably won, until an extraordinary event turned the encounter to tragedy.

Lord Raglan sent orders to his divisional commander Lord Lucan to prevent the Russians from taking a number of captured guns. Raglan was on a hill, Lucan in the thick of battle. The liaison officer who bore the second, fateful order could offer no clarification. In a moment of ghastly error, Lucan ordered Cardigan, commanding the Light Brigade, to attack well-defended Russian guns at the end of a long valley. The brigade rode off and were cut down by fire from all sides.

William Howard Russell, *The Times* war correspondent, wrote: "Don Quixote in his tilt against the windmill was not near so rash and reckless as the gallant fellows who prepared without a thought to rush on almost certain death."

The scrawled order said: "Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front — follow the enemy and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns." Lucan read the order and asked the liaison officer where he should advance to. The officer pointed to the Russians and said: "There are the enemy and there are the guns, sir, before them; it is your duty to take them." Russell added: "Lord Lucan, with reluctance, gave the order to Lord Cardigan to advance upon the guns, conceiving that his orders compelled him to do so."

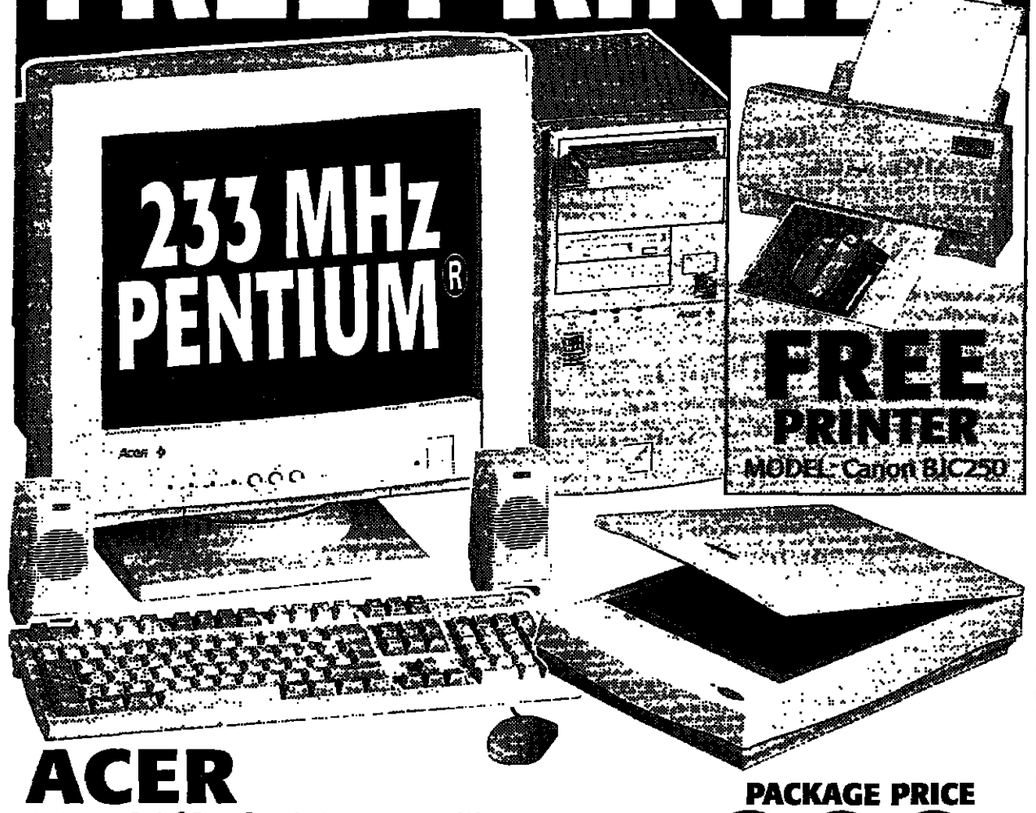
Of the 607 men who took part in the charge, only 198 had been accounted for by the end of the day.

The Crimean War, intended to deter Russian expansionism in the Balkans, was a messy, inconclusive and costly campaign which caused a great political row at home. In January 1855, after a succession of military setbacks, *The Times* thundered: "We wipe our hands of the war under the existing management." One of its few long-term benefits, brought about largely by Russell's reporting of conditions suffered by the wounded, was the laying of the foundations of proper military nursing under Florence Nightingale. And, of course, a memorable piece of Tennyson.

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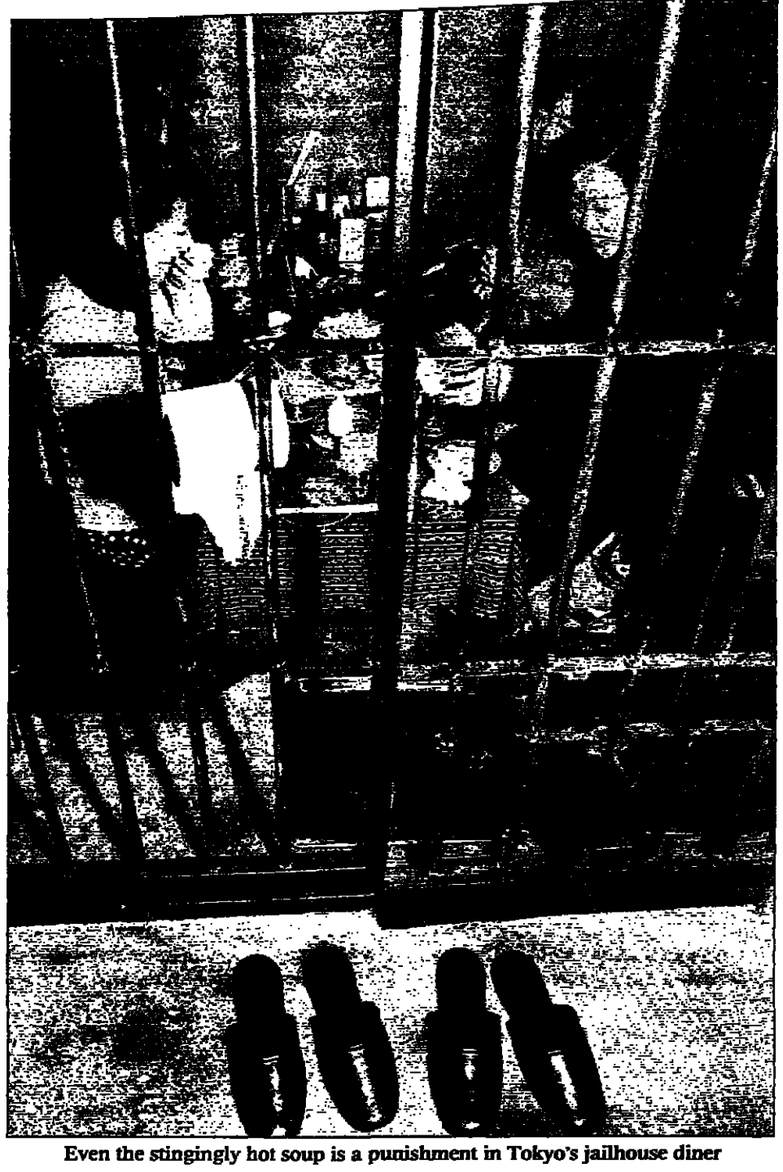
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Tokyo does porridge

Japanese are having fun in prison, **Robert Whymant** says

NAOTO HOSAKA



Even the stingingly hot soup is a punishment in Tokyo's jailhouse diner

ALCATRAZ BC is the name of a Tokyo restaurant with a captive clientele. Patrons are met at the door by female "warders", handcuffed and escorted past a well oiled guillotine to cells.

Meals, eaten behind bars, include boiled rice with grated yam, stewed fishheads, and a stingingly hot soup described by the menu as a punishment. But young Tokyoites are not flocking to Alcatraz for fine cuisine. They are after a taste of prison.

"Our aim is to give our guests an authentic prison experience," Hisashi Yasuda, the owner, says. "We have created a nice space for people to relax after work."

There is never an empty cell. Since the opening last year, people have been lining up to be locked away. Alcatraz BC, in the nightclub district of Roppongi, is particularly popular with what the Japanese call "office ladies" under the age of 30.

"It is fun coming here after after a long day at the office," Mari Kawamoto, 22, a clerk, says. "At least when the wardens push you around here, you know it is not for real."

Only the tiny miniskirts worn by the pretty warders detract from the reality. For additional entertainment there is a staged jailbreak by an inmate — lights are dimmed, sirens scream until the inmate is caught and patrons are invited to give him a beating.

Apart from these distractions, the regime is strict. Because the individual cells are not equipped with lavatories, customers who want to satisfy the call of nature must plead with a warden to unlock them and escort them to the restaurant lavatory.

Real gluttons for punishment insist on eating with their handcuffs on. But prison regulations posted near the entrance stipulate that this is not compulsory.

The prices for doing porridge have been kept low by Tokyo standards. Three dishes and one or two cocktails with names such as "death row drink" come to about 4,000 yen (£17) per person. On paying, patrons are warned that they are only being "let out on parole".





The food arrives in Alcatraz BC and at least some of the customers have decided to remove their handcuffs

Shoppers 'duped' by supermarket brands

BY ROBIN YOUNG

THE Consumers' Association alleged yesterday that many supermarket customers could not tell supermarkets' own-brand goods from the branded products of leading manufacturers.

A report by the association published yesterday claimed that the confusion was being caused in supermarkets by lookalike packaging, often designed to make customers believe that supermarket own-brands had a common origin with branded products.

Consumers' Association research suggested that in a six-month period, almost three out of ten shoppers bought or lifted from the shelf a product they did not intend to, because they mistook it for something else.

Of those who made such a mistake, more than a third mistook the supermarket own-label for a branded product. Almost two-thirds, (63 per cent) blamed the design of the pack, and in particular the colour (59 per cent). About a third of those who mistook supermarket brands for the branded product they wanted realised their mistake before reaching the checkout, the association said, but most did not realise until they got home or used the product.

The British Brands Group, which is lobbying for a clause to be included in the Government's Competition Bill strengthening the law against lookalike packaging, claimed the findings supported its own research, which found that 42 per cent of consumers admitted lookalike packaging might lead them to purchase in error, while 32 per cent thought that similar packaging was an indication that the product was made by the manufacturer of the brand leader.

A number of disputes over lookalikes have in the past led to controversy and threats of legal action. Asda was taken to court by United Biscuits in 1996 for "passing off" its Puffin brand as UB's similarly packaged Penguin biscuits. In 1997, Asda was taken to court again by International Distillers and Vintners over the close resemblance of Asda spirits to IDV's Malibu, Archers, Southern Comfort and Jack Daniels brands.

J Sainsbury incurred the wrath of Coca-Cola when it launched its own brand of Classic cola in 1994, and Safeway was the subject of complaints from Kellogg's over its packaging of cornflakes.

Tesco, whose chief executive is Terry Leahy, has decided along with Sainsbury and Safeway to design packaging with their own distinct identities, but some of their products were still included in the association's research attempting to assess consumer responses to packaging similarities.

Tesco Honey Nut Cornflakes were matched against Kellogg's Crunchy Nut Cornflakes, while Sainsbury Full Roast Coffee was paired with Nescafé Fine Blend. Asda's Silk fabric conditioner was pitted with Comfort Vitality Lemon, and Tesco Toothpaste for sensitive teeth was matched with Sensodyne.

The association found that more than four fifths of consumers described the pairs as similar or very similar.



Leahy: Tesco to design distinct packaging

Top store is fined £8,000 for old food

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

THE supermarket giant J Sainsbury has been fined £8,000 for selling products nearly a month past their sell-by date.

The high street chain whose latest television advertising campaign boasts a "fresh approach to shopping" was caught when trading standards officials bought cream slices, yoghurts and cheese and onion pasties at the Ordsall store in Regent Road, Salford, Greater Manchester that were past their use-by date.

At Salford magistrates court, Sainsbury's was fined £8,000 with £772 costs. It admitted six charges under the Food Safety Act between July and October last year.

Afterwards Bruce Jassi, director of Salford Council's environmental services, said: "We will always make sure we use the powers open to us where we find offences have been committed."

A spokesman for Sainsbury's said: "There are clear procedures in place and these have been re-emphasised to staff to ensure this does not happen again in the future."

Chinese selling ban has Avon stalling

FROM REUTERS IN BEIJING

CHINA has slammed the door on the Avon lady with a ban on direct selling, threatening a new trade dispute with the United States ahead of a visit by President Clinton. "We have ceased all direct sales operations indefinitely," said an Avon official in China.

The ban on direct sales threatens hundreds of millions of dollars of investments by Avon Products Inc and other companies including Amway Corp, Sara Lee Corp and Mary Kay Cosmetics.

Amyway's director of international affairs, Richard Holwill, said he understood the issue had been taken up with Chinese trade officials by Charlene Barshefsky, the US Trade Representative, during her current visit to China. A US Embassy spokesman said she had been briefed on the ban but he declined to confirm whether she broached the topic with her hosts.

The Chinese State Council, or Cabinet, ordered firms engaging in direct selling to wind up their businesses or apply for licences as conventional retailers by October 31. "Due to immature market conditions, inadequate legislation and immature consumer psychology, direct sales have proved unsuitable for China and thus must be resolutely banned," the *People's Daily* newspaper said on Thursday. It said many companies had "waged excessive and false publicity campaigns and lured consumers into buying excessively high-priced commodities".

It added: "What is worse, a number of people have made use of direct sales to engage in superstition as well as reactionary and underworld gang activities." State media have linked direct selling to the growth of religious sects.

"Certain illegal companies have damaged our reputation," the Avon official said at the company's China headquarters in Guangzhou. Avon, the first direct selling firm to enter China, had invested more than $90 million (£54 million).

هكذا من الاصل

Capital sets sights on millennium makeover

Mark Henderson reports on plans for a festival on the Thames to celebrate London's 'cultural pearls'

More than 40 of London's most famous landmarks will have a millennium makeover to attract new visitors during 2000, in an ambitious cultural festival based on the Thames.

Lambeth Palace, the London home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, will open to the public for the first time since the 1951 Festival of Britain, allowing tourists to visit the staterooms, chapel and crypt and the library that holds Dick Whittington's will and the medical records of the madness of George III. There will also be exhibitions on the work of the archbishops who have lived there.

The Royal Courts of Justice plan to re-enact one of the most important trials in British legal history in the Lord Chief Justice's Court — the Penn and Mead case, which established the role of the jury. Actors will play the Quakers William Penn and William Mead, who were charged with unlawful assembly in the City of London in 1670. A jury acquitted the pair, but the Recorder of London refused to accept the verdict and jailed and fined the jurors. The foreman, Edward Bushell, applied for and won a writ of *habeas corpus*, the jurors were freed and the right of a jury to reach any verdict was won. William Penn emigrated to the United States and founded Pennsylvania.

Other tourist attractions such as the Royal Opera House, St Paul's Cathedral and the Tate Gallery will also join forces in the String of Pearls festival, with events and exhibitions running throughout 2000. All three of London's Unesco world heritage sites — The Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey; the Tower of London; and Historic Greenwich — are included.

Every site is no more than ten minutes' walk from the river, and attractions will be linked by the £21 million river bus service announced by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, last month. Ministers hope the festival will encourage Londoners and tourists to use the water to get about, by portraying the Thames as a necklace of cultural "pearls". The Millennium Dome at Greenwich would be a "jewelled clasp" at its eastern end.

Dylan Hammond, the festival co-ordinator, said a celebration based on the Thames was the most appropriate way for the capital to mark the millennium. "London is here because of the river, and what could better symbolise the passing of 1,000 years of British history?"

Each "pearl" will celebrate a theme representing a "building block of British civilisation". The Houses of Parliament will represent democracy and constitutional government, while the Tower will look after defence of the realm and London Weekend Television will represent freedom of speech.

The British Airways Millennium Wheel, a 500ft Ferris wheel that will stand opposite the Houses of Parliament, will host an exhibition explaining the role of each "pearl" in London's history.

The Tower of London will hold parades, ceremonies and exhibitions, including the Constable's Dues, in which sailors on warships sheltering in the Pool of London present the Governor with a barrel of rum in return for the protection of the Tower's guns.

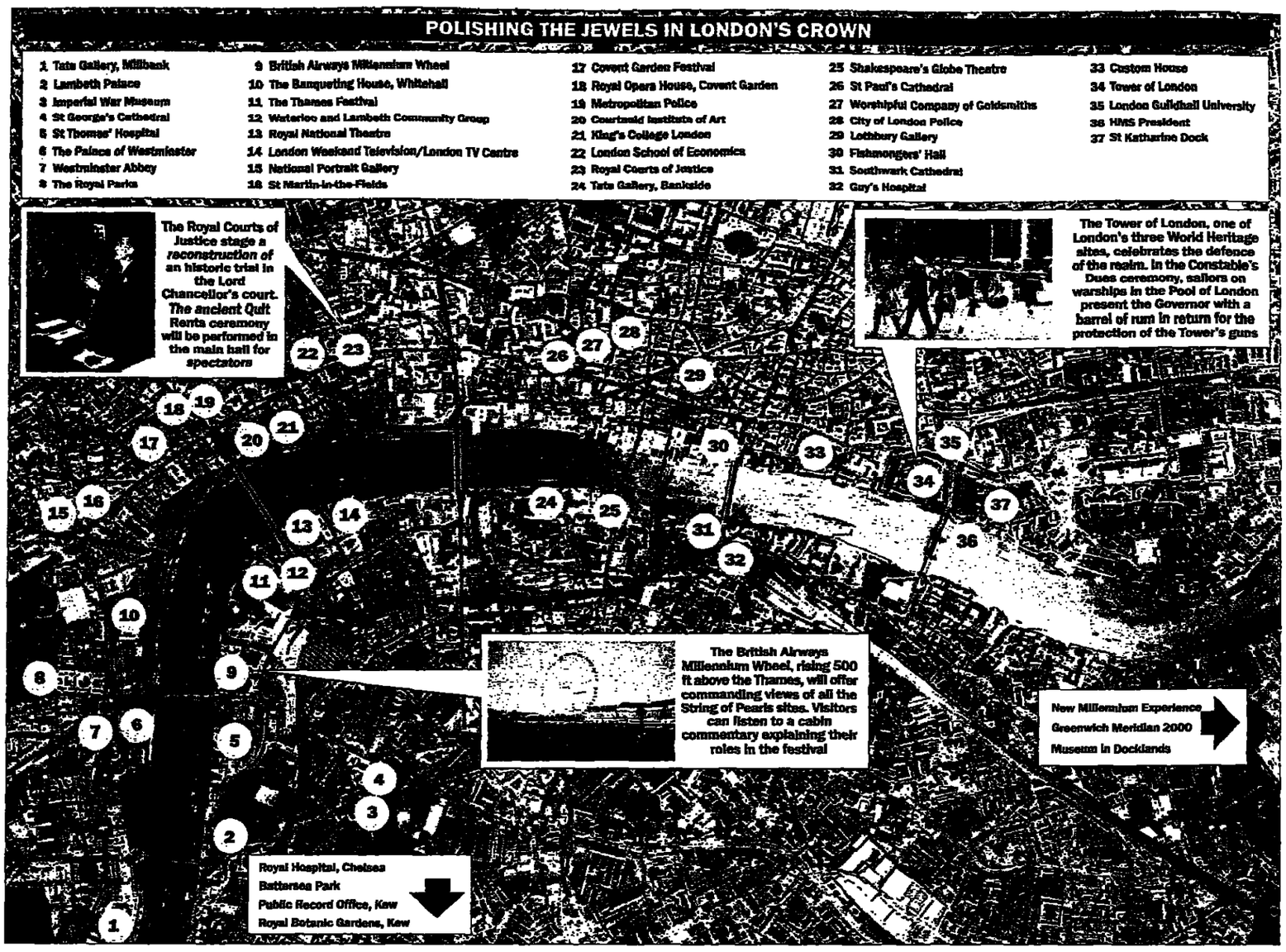
Southwark Cathedral has commissioned a cycle of mystery plays from John Constable, a local playwright, which may be staged in conjunction with the Globe Theatre. Guy's and St Thomas' Medical School has teamed up with the National Theatre to present shows on the history of medicine, and the school will appoint "distinguished Millennium Fellows" from abroad. Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House of Commons, has given strong support to the scheme and Westminster Hall is likely to host an exhibition on the development of the constitution, from King Alfred to Scottish and Welsh devolution.

Nick Raynsford, the Minister for London, said that, if the millennium celebrations were going to leave one lasting benefit for London, it would be the return of a proper river transport system.

"The idea of having a whole festival all along the river from Greenwich to Kew is a wonderful plan ... The river is this city's lifeblood, the landmark by which people define the part of London they live in. A celebration of the river will be a celebration of London's history and heritage as well as a nod to the future."

New river bus services, including a Millennium Dome express and a "hopper" that will criss-cross the river, were announced last month by Mr Prescott. Four new piers will be built, two old ones will be refurbished and five further new ones could follow if the service is successful.

> "The river is this city's lifeblood, the landmark by which people define the London they live in"



Pope warns of 'dark clouds' over Europe

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

VATICAN concern at "dark clouds" looming over the Continent as the millennium approaches has prompted the Pope to call a gathering of European bishops in Rome next year.

A Vatican document to be issued next week speaks of the need for Europe to rediscover its Christian roots and refers to the possible salvation of the Continent through the Second Coming.

The publication is a *Lineamenta*, a working document for the planned synod. Its existence was disclosed at the end of a conference of Roman Catholic bishops of England and Wales yesterday. European bishops last held a synod in 1991 and another gathering in under a decade would be unprecedented — indicating the extent of papal concern.

The document, to be issued next week to diocesan bishops in England and Wales, reveals that the Pope is worried about the resurgence of nationalism and wants to see "integral rebirth" of the Continent. Written by a senior Vatican cardinal, it says Europe must overcome "fatigue, doubt and discouragement". A rediscovery of faith would "disperse the many dark clouds hanging over Europe".

The document notes that the collapse of communism has restored individual freedoms but with it has come progress "often-times devoid of spiritual values".

The author, Cardinal Jan Schotte, criticises "outdated institutions" of democracy in Europe, which are displaying a "certain lack of tolerance". He accuses Europeans of attempting to "eliminate" reference to the Christian faith in promoting the right to freedom of choice, and points with alarm to the growth of sects and new religious movements.

However, the document concedes that there is a "general desire for goods of the spirit" and looks forward to a "new revelation" that will reawaken hope and faith.

"As an epoch comes to an end with the approach of the third millennium, Europe is fully in possession of great signs of faith and testimony," it says.

"At the same time, however, the Continent feels the wear on its peoples produced by history's various tensions, oftentimes generating great disappointment. Despite this situation, Europe is not abandoned to a hopelessness beyond redemption; its Christian roots remain and constantly endure."

God is reserving to Himself the "proper time when grace will result in a new revelation of his Person".

The document acknowledges progress made in addressing drug addiction, pornography, sex tourism, paedophilia, abortion and euthanasia. "On the other hand, insensitivity to other people's sufferings also seems to be on the increase, caused by its excessive coverage and diffusion by the information media."

The European synod will be the last in a series of pre-millennial gatherings called by the Pope. The Asian bishops are meeting now in Rome. The Americans met before them, and the Africans in 1994.

The 22 diocesan bishops in the Catholic Church in England and Wales who receive the document will have to answer questions on the meaning of the collapse of the Berlin Wall, on the pluralism of faith and culture in Europe and on how the desire for spirituality is manifesting itself in their dioceses.

They will take into account the observations of more than four million Catholics in their churches. The responses, from bishops throughout Europe, will be collated into another document which will form the basis of discussions at the synod, likely to be held in the autumn of 1999. At least four senior bishops from England and Wales are expected to be invited.

BISHOPS TO PROMOTE BIBLE

The Roman Catholic bishops of England and Wales agreed at their week-long conference to put more emphasis on promoting the Bible. Monsignor Arthur Roche, general secretary of the conference, said: "The bishops are concerned to recognise the place the Bible has alongside the Eucharist at the heart of the Church and are looking for ways to make people more familiar with the Scriptures." They also set up a committee to address environmental issues.

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Rumours fuel mob on trail of paedophile

Simon de Bruxelles on protests that became a riot

THE rumour spread swiftly among the small crowd outside Yeovil police station: Sidney Cooke, paedophile and convicted child killer, was in Burger King, queueing with a plain-clothes police officer.

The story may or not have been true, but the chief rumourmonger had her answers ready. What was a man supposedly to be under lock and key in a police station doing in a fast-food restaurant, she was asked.

"Staff in the police canteen have refused to serve him and no one will go out to buy food for him, so he has to get his own," replied the woman, who was in her early 20s. No, she had not seen him herself, but she had spoken to a man who had. Across the West Country, alleged sightings based on even flimsier evidence triggered hostile demonstrations in four towns and a riot in Bristol. Trouble began for Avon and Somerset police as soon as Cooke, 71, moved to the West Country last weekend, two weeks after his release from prison, where he had served nine years for the sexual killing of 14-year-old Jason Swift. Police had left him in no doubt that his life would be in danger unless he agreed to stay in voluntary custody until his long-term future could be organised.

When word spread last weekend that he was in Yeovil, hundreds of people took to the streets. As the protests became more vociferous and the threats more dire, police decided to stage what most locals are convinced was a charade.

Screens were erected at the entrance to the modern police station and a man brought out under a blanket. He was bundled into a police van and driven off at speed. If police hoped that the protesters would believe it was Cooke and go home, they were to be disappointed. Their troubles multiplied. Demonstrators at Yeovil were convinced it was a ruse and stayed put. Meanwhile, word spread in Bristol, Bridgwater and Minehead that Cooke was in those localities instead.

Despite assurances by Stephen Pilkington, the Chief Constable, that Cooke was in "secure accommodation" and posed no threat, his refusal to give Cooke's whereabouts spread the protests rather than diluting them.

The tactic backfired most spectacularly on Thursday in West Knowle, Bristol, after a claim that a man hidden under a blanket had been smuggled into the police station. Within minutes a crowd of 300, including mothers carrying children, had gathered outside the station.

> "Most admitted that they just wanted Cooke to leave town and become someone else's problem"

As evening fell, the peaceful protest gave way to chanting by dozens of youths, many of them drunk. As officers in riot gear were deployed, the mob tried to storm the police station, pelting it with bricks and petrol bombs and breaking several windows.

There were appeals for calm from a loudspeaker on a police helicopter as more than 100 officers used dogs and armoured vans to try to force the youths back. The violence left 46 police officers hurt, mostly with minor injuries, and 12 people under arrest.

Chief Inspector Colin Benson yesterday blamed the riot on the "malicious" caller to local newspapers and radio stations who had begun the rumour. He said: "There was no such prisoner taken to Broadbury Road in those circumstances. The call was purely malicious and intended to incite a violent reaction in a volatile situation."

Tony Burton, Chief Constable of Gloucestershire and the Association of Chief Police Officers' spokesman on sex offenders, said: "They claim that the public has a right to know where these people are. But there is no right to know when he is in secure custody and no danger to the public."

Protesters in Yeovil are determined to continue their nightly vigils outside the police station until they are told whether Cooke is inside. The mere possibility of his presence has led to near-panic in the market town. More than 50 children were kept out of two primary schools this week. Paul Perry, 32, one of the organisers of the vigils, said his three children had not been at school all week. "I am genuinely afraid for their safety," he said. "The police say Cooke is no threat to anyone, but how can they guarantee that? In the eyes of the law, he is a free man and can walk out any time. Child sex offenders should be put in prison for life or until they are no longer any danger."

A few protesters accepted that there must be somewhere for paedophiles to go once they had served their sentence. "We want to make him so scared he won't dare set a foot outside," said Ivor Charles, 59, a grandfather of four.

Most demonstrators admitted that they just wanted Cooke to leave town and become somebody else's problem. They intend to hold a march this morning to confront Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrats leader and Yeovil MP, who denounced the protests as a witch-hunt.

Leading article, page 23

JAY WILLIAMS



Demonstrators' notices outside Yeovil police station yesterday. More than 50 children have been kept out of two local primary schools

Out of sight, but never out of mind

By Richard Ford
Home Correspondent

THE Home Office is to pay the bill for keeping the paedophile Robert Oliver in a private clinic, where he is staying to escape the fury of the public. Agreement was reached for central government to pay the £320-a-day cost after the police and the Probation Service complained about the financial burden of protecting him.

Oliver, 43, has been in Blenheim House, a medium-secure unit in Milton Keynes, since February and is likely to remain there for many months. The unit, run by Westminster Healthcare, houses psychiatric patients and others who no longer need the top-security conditions of hospitals such as Broadmoor.

Oliver has a 24-hour guard provided by Thames Valley Police but is a voluntary patient and is free to leave the centre at any time. Public anger is such, however, that he is frightened of being assaulted should he leave.

Oliver went to Milton Keynes after probation officers spent four months attempting to find a sanctuary for him. Religious retreats refused to take him because they sometimes provide refuge for teenagers. He was seen by a psychiatrist, who diagnosed a personality disorder, but it was not sufficient to qualify him for compulsory admission to a psychiatric hospital under the Mental Health Act.

Oliver, who was released after serving ten years of a 15-year sentence for the manslaughter of the runaway teenager Jason Swift, spends all his time inside Blenheim House. He has not even walked around the unit's small garden. He arrived there after spending four months in a Sussex police station, having been driven from town to town by protesters.

There were day-long protests outside Blenheim House but, two months on, residents are putting all their energy into establishing the White Ribbon Campaign for Justice. Its aim is to have child killers kept in jail until they die. It is also demanding an inquiry into why the Crown Prosecution Service charged Oliver and Sidney Cooke, a fellow paedophile, with the manslaughter rather than murder of Jason Swift.

The campaign has developed spontaneously; there is no constitution, no managing committee and little funding. But branches have formed in Northampton and Cardiff. Sydney Swift, the father of Jason, is planning to start a branch in Kent and another is expected to be set up by a woman in Somerset, where Cooke, 71, is believed to be in voluntary police custody.

The campaign is run from the kitchen of Roy Copeland's home in Milton Keynes. Mr Copeland, a full-time carer for his wife, Wendy, who has rheumatoid arthritis, said: "The original aim was to get this beast out of this city." But he and his neighbours realised that driving paedophiles from town to town was not a solution. Mr Copeland, 45, who has three adult children, said: "Much as I do not want him in this area, at least we know where he is and that he is under police surveillance."

RISING TIDE OF VIGILANTE ATTACKS

A SURVEY of probation services has revealed more than 40 vigilante attacks or "outings" of actual or suspected sex offenders in the past year. They included:

- ☐ surveillance of a high-risk offender in the Midlands being abandoned after local press identified him;
- ☐ one group threatening to nail a sex offender to a tree;
- ☐ photographs being put up of an offender in Wales who was being monitored. He quickly disappeared;
- ☐ another offender in the North being "outed" by a tabloid newspaper. He has moved and is now untraceable;
- ☐ an attempt to try to run over a paedophile;
- ☐ the brother of an adolescent sex offender being beaten up;
- ☐ a probation hostel being besieged by 400 local people. Residents had to be evacuated by the police — although the sex offender was not staying there.

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California dreaming becomes a reality for the British student who is surfing to fame

Life's a beach for Baywatch recruit



JAMES BONE'S NEW YORK

HELEN COLESHILL came to New York to pursue her American Dream. But even she could not have expected that within four months she would have landed a part on the world's most watched television show.

The Middlesex University performing-arts student, who moved to the Big Apple at Christmas to work at a television production company while finishing off her degree by mail, chanced upon a contest in Washington Square Park for new talent for the hit series *Baywatch*. "I did not even know about the competition until that day," she tells me. "I just arrived, filled in a form and the next thing I was on stage."

The daughter of a special-needs teacher from Cambridge, Helen, 21, did not have to don the skimpy red swimming costume worn by the show's bodacious California lifeguards. But she was put through her paces with an improvised beach emergency in the middle of the park. No problem: she does weight-training and aerobics three times a week. The dozens of contestants were also required to read a scene from the series and make a short speech spelling out their qualifications for a part.

The contest was the first of 25 to be held in different cities which will earn the 50 winners — 25 men and 25 women — a free trip to California, where one couple will be featured on a *Baywatch* episode. The runners-up will appear as extras — and be seen by a billion people around the globe.

The British student was stunned when *Baywatch* stars Michael Bergin and Angelica Bridges picked her as the winner over all the other wannabe actresses who earn their crust working as waitresses in New York. "It was a really big surprise," she says. "I think it was personality as well as looks they were looking for — but that's a cliché."

Known in Cambridge as an accomplished musician who plays the trumpet and piano, Helen had hopes of launching an acting career in America but never imagined herself as the next Pamela Anderson. She hopes this is her big break in Hollywood: "I think *Baywatch* is ready for a six-foot British babe like me."

SHANNON SWEENEY



Helen Coleshill: "I think Baywatch is ready for a six-foot British babe like me"

Mistress index of economic growth



CALL it the "Felder Theory of Economic Growth". *Commenting on the boom in high-profile palimony suits*, the New York divorce lawyer Raoul Felder says there is a direct link between the economy and the number of mistresses who walk into his office. He says he can judge the economic cycle better than the chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, above. "The man who would pick up a street prostitute goes to a call-girl. The man who would hire a call-girl goes to an escort service. The man who would use an escort service gets a mistress. Everybody is upwardly mobile."



☐ *The K-Mart supermarket chain has pulled* Sesame Street *T-shirts from its 2,100 shops after garments featuring the Cookie Monster, left, started mysteriously blurting out obscenities. The T-shirts showed the puppet character at the wheel of a dumper truck with a button children could push to hear the message: "Stand back. Here comes cookies. Mmmm, delicious." Somehow, "Stand back" had been replaced by a coarser sentiment.*

Developers run into Amazonian hostility



Sonia Braga, left, is trying to give the Kiss of the Spider Woman to a property developer. The Brazilian actress is campaigning in New York's trendy TriBeCa area to stop a new commodities exchange from opening. "We should stop the spread of ugly, massive buildings," the sultry Sonia says. As one wag put it: "If every environmental crusader looked like Sonia, the Amazon might be encroaching on Manhattan now instead of disappearing by the hour."

Poaching by 'fur hag' thwarted

ANNA Wintour's attempt to hire a new spin-doctor has backfired. The British-born Editor of American *Vogue* has recently been suffering some serious PR woes.

Because of her reputation as a "fur hag", she now lives besieged by animal rights campaigners. In addition, she has been denounced in the new autobiography of her British rival at *Harper's Bazaar*, Liz Tilberis, as "peremptory and rather tactless, (and) unconcerned with 'the little people'." When her lieutenant Anne Buford quit, Wintour tried to poach Kim Akhtar from her job for the veteran CBS newscaster Dan Rather. Ms Buford then decided to hang around, and Ms Ahktar resolved to stay put. Mr Rather is organising a "welcome home" party.

☐ *A couple are informing friends of their recent separation via e-mail. It's the electronic equivalent of the "We've moved" postcard.*

☐ **Walking the little one in an old-fashioned pram is apparently uncool. Since spring broke out, I have seen young parents propelling their kids in pushchairs while they ride rollerblades, bicycles and even skateboard.**

☐ *The New York production of the play* Art *has advertised the show by painting its title in capital letters on street corners in SoHo. A graffiti artist added a letter to the beginning of the word, so it now reads: "T-A-R-T".*

☐ **Rudolph Giuliani, the Mayor of New York, has revealed that he is an amateur photographer. A local gallery is staging an exhibit of 23 pictures that the mayor snapped from a police helicopter, featuring aerial views of a large burst in a water main.**

Fry gets a scalding



THE effort by Stephen Fry, right, to rewrite history by eliminating Hitler in his new comic novel *Making History* has provoked howls of protest from *The New York Times*. Chief book reviewer *Michiko* Kakutani said it was "deeply offensive". In the novel, Hitler is never born, but someone else takes over the Nazi party and tries to wipe out European Jewry. "The problem is that Mr Fry has tried to make the death of six million people part of his joke and the joke isn't funny — it's repellent," Ms Kakutani said. Fry also offended New York sensibilities on a visit to promote *Wilde*. The film, he said, had "full-frontal smoking".

Murder is a key job risk for Americans

FROM REUTERS IN ATLANTA

MURDERS have overtaken machine-related injuries in the United States to become the second-leading cause of job-related deaths after traffic accidents, health officials said.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said murders accounted for 13.5 per cent of job-related deaths between 1980 and 1994, while motor vehicle crashes accounted for 23.1 per cent of employment-linked fatalities in the same period.

The CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health said deaths from motor vehicle accidents while working, machine-related injuries, falls and electrocutions have declined since 1980, while deaths from homicide have remained constant.

It said that murders were the leading cause of work-related deaths in California, the District of Columbia, Michigan and New York between 1980 and 1994.

The institute said 88,622 workers died from job-related injuries between 1980 and 1994. There were 5,406 workplace fatalities in 1994, down from 7,405 deaths in 1980. The institute said 3.3 million workers were treated in hospital casualty departments for occupational injuries in 1996.

An institute report in 1996 found that workers were at greater risk of murder or assault if they were involved in the exchange of money, had routine contact with the public, worked alone or in small numbers, worked late or very early hours, or worked in high-crime areas.

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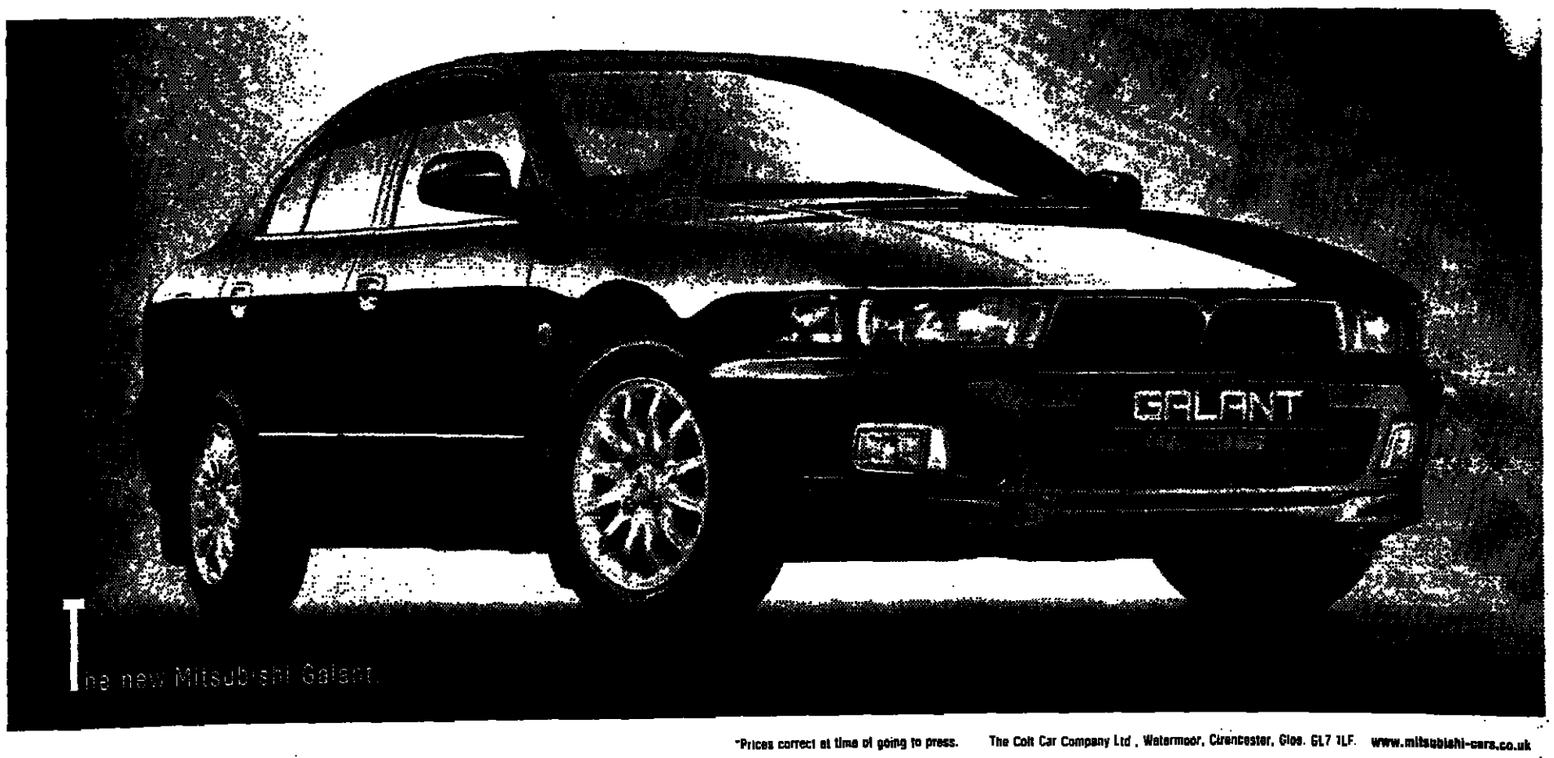
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Perfect proof of a great poet's pedantry

Ben Macintyre reveals

Baudelaire's penchant for anguished revision

A UNIQUE set of editorial proofs annotated by Charles Baudelaire, which will be put up for auction this summer, proves that the great French poet was also a pernickety pedant who drove his editors to distraction by continually revising his work.

The original proofs of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Baudelaire's great collection of poems published in 1857, will be sold by the Drouot auction house on June 17, and are expected to fetch at least Fr4 million (£400,000).

Baudelaire was a notorious bon viveur and absinthe-addict, but when it came to the publication of his own writings he was astonishingly meticulous. Before he gave permission for printing to go ahead, he went through every page of *Les Fleurs du Mal* adding thousands of corrections and remarks in his straggling script, and often changing his mind several times.

The proofs were preserved by the poet's long-suffering editor and friend, Auguste Poulet-Malassis.

Baudelaire could hardly see a comma, it appears, without crossing it out, reinstating it and then removing it again. He plainly spent hours pondering whether to use a grave accent or a circumflex: "Poète seems to me to have only one foot, whereas Poête has two," he remarks in one marginal note.

On the title page, for example, Baudelaire excised the word "poems" and scrawled: "It is obvious that *Les Fleurs du Mal* are poems." But he could also be a drastic self-editor, often cutting out or rewriting entire verses on the typeset page.

His editor, whose remarks often appear alongside his, was driven to distraction by the poet's nit-picking. "In my library you will find a copy of *Les Fleurs du Mal* which will clearly illustrate the author's perfectionism and scrupulousness, and will also give a good idea of the printers' patience," M Poulet-Malssis wrote.



Baudelaire: meticulous

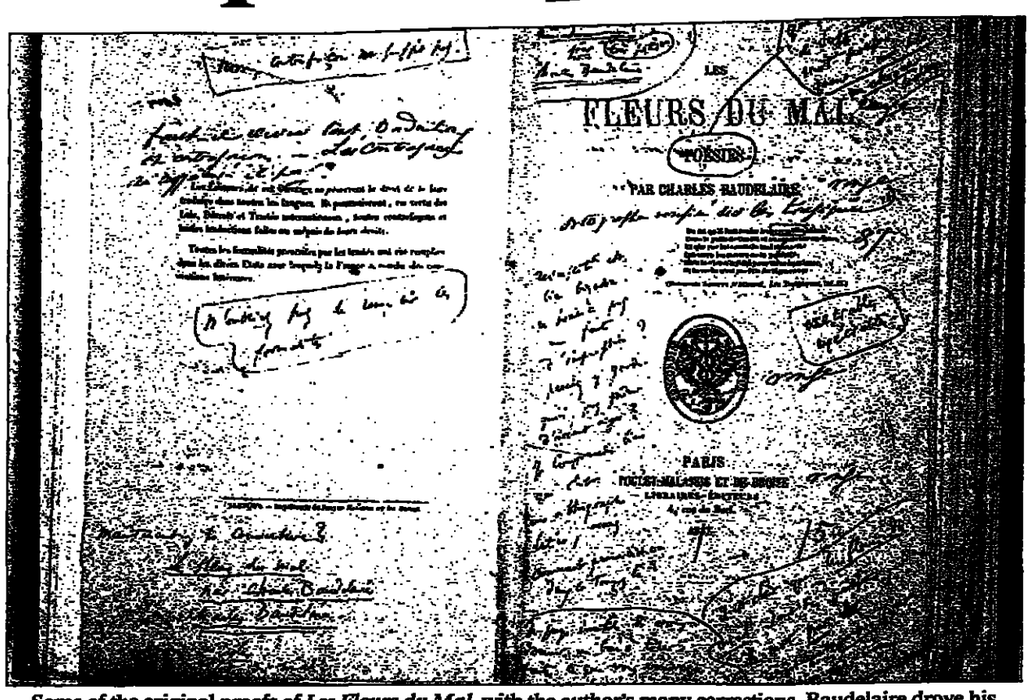
At one point the editor lost his temper and scribbled: "I believe, M Baudelaire, that you are screwing around with me, which I do not in any way deserve."

Baudelaire plainly realised that his constant revisions were infuriating. "Though I fear this may be unwelcome, I am reinstating this last verse," he wrote apologetically.

"Sometimes there are ten or eleven versions of the same poem," Claude Pichois, a Baudelaire scholar, told *Le Figaro*. "He corrects, reorganises, adds another stanza, with extreme attention to the purity of his text and the way the typography is represented."

The 19th-century guardians of French morals were rather less delicate in their approach to Baudelaire's work. Soon after publication of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, the poet was convicted of "outraging public decency and good morals". He was fined Fr300 and six poems were cut out of the collection — a judgment that was not reversed until 1949.

Scholars have described the proofs as a remarkable insight into the way Baudelaire worked, as well as a testament to the close and sometimes tempestuous relationship between a writer and his editor.



Some of the original proofs of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, with the author's many corrections. Baudelaire drove his editors to distraction by continually revising his work. He often changed his mind several times

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Belgian leadership dismisses call to quit over Dutroux

By Charles Bremner

THE Belgian Government of Jean-Luc Dehaene yesterday shrugged off a tide of indignation and Opposition calls to resign after the escape of Marc Dutroux, the paedophile and suspected child killer.

Although Dutroux was quickly rearrested on Thursday and two senior ministers resigned, public anger raged unabated over an act of breathtaking incompetence that is widely deemed to have stripped the remaining credibility from the unpopular centre-left administration of Mr Dehaene.

Marc Verwilghen, the popular opposition MP who headed the parliament's inquiry into the Dutroux affair, said the only right thing for Mr Dehaene would have been "to put an end to this Government after so many debacles by the justice system and the police".

The opposition coalition called for a no-confidence vote on Tuesday, but Mr Dehaene, who has a reputation for stubbornness, is expected to struggle on to the end of his mandate in 18 months' time.

The hero of the episode was Stéphane Michaux, a park ranger who noticed Dutroux in a wood in the Ardennes as the manhunt was under way on Thursday evening. Mr Michaux called a gendarme and the pair ordered Dutroux, who carried an unloaded pistol, to surrender.

Their action probably saved the Government from inescapable resignation. The gendarmerie explained yesterday that Dutroux had been given more freedom inside the Neufchâteau courthouse because he had been going there to consult his dossier for months without any trouble. The immediate guard in the courthouse had been reduced from seven to two.

Leading article, page 23



Michaux: spotted Dutroux in woods

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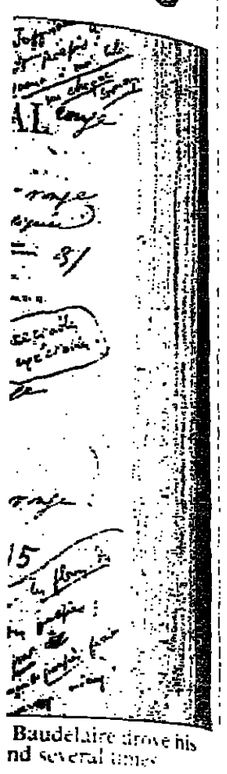
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BRUSSELS

Secret vote hands victory to Yeltsin

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S month-long government crisis evaporated yesterday when the State Duma bowed to President Yeltsin's will and endorsed Sergei Kiriyenko, his nominee for Prime Minister, in the third and final round of voting.

A jubilant Mr Yeltsin welcomed the result in a television address to the nation soon after it was announced. "The crisis over Russia's government is now over," he said. "I see the outcome of today's vote in the Duma as a triumph of reason over emotion. Political equilibrium is essential to maintain government and to work we."

Mr Yesin, who was shown envelopig the diminutive Mr Kiriyenk in a congratulatory bear-hugsaid he had signed a decree confirming his appointment. To celebrate the occasion, hepresented the new Prime Minister with a framed, signed photograph of himself.

Mr Kiyenko, who has held office inan acting capacity since Mr Yeltsin dismissed the entire Government on March 23, is expected to form his Cabinet within the next few days. He has already said that the acting incumbents at the so-called power ministries — Yevgeni Primakov at Foreign Affairs, Igor Sergeyev at Defence, Sergei Stepashin at Interior and Mikhail Zadornov at Finance — will stay on.



Yeltsin: jubilation at end of government crisis

In the event, the outcome was not even close. Of the 276 Duma deputies who voted, 251 backed Mr Kiriyenko, well over the 226 overall majority he needed to assume office. Only 25 voted against; the remainder indicated their disapproval or indifference by not taking part.

The assembly had firmly rejected Mr Kiriyenko's nomination in the two previous ballots, following the lead of the largest faction, the Communist Party, which had argued that at 35 years old and with less than a year's experience in government, the former Energy Minister was too inexperienced for the job. When Mr Yeltsin re-nominated him for a third time, Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist leader, vowed that his faction would remain staunchly opposed.

But the outcome became almost a foregone conclusion after the Duma agreed that this time the vote would be conducted by secret ballot, giving deputies the opportunity to break ranks and support Mr Kiriyenko under the cover of anonymity. Had the Duma rejected him yesterday, Mr Yeltsin would have had no choice under the constitution but to dissolve the legislature and call new parliamentary elections. It was no secret that many deputies were extremely reluctant to risk losing their parliamentary privileges, including free Moscow housing, travel and well-equipped offices. Mr Yeltsin also indicated that he would be willing to consider extending some of the deputies' privileges.

After the vote, Mr Kiriyenko thanked the Duma for its support, which he said showed its awareness of the need to avoid upheavals to make Russia great. Some deputies applauded. Mr Zyuganov sat stony-faced, well aware that while he had maintained a principled position, his party had suffered a humiliating defeat.

☐ **Washington:** The White House welcomed the appointment of Mr Kiriyenko and anticipated it would have a close working relationship with him. *(Reuters)*

ALEKSANDR ZEMLIANICHENKO / AP



Sergei Kiriyenko during yesterday's Duma debate. He was endorsed as Prime Minister by deputies, many of whom feared losing their jobs and privileges

Jubilant Serbs 'risk civil war'

FROM TOM WALKER IN PRISTINA

SERBS yesterday celebrated their rejection of foreign intervention in the Kosovo crisis, raising fears among diplomats that President Milosevic of Yugoslavia has pushed his alienated people a further step towards civil war with ethnic Albanians.

The election authorities in Belgrade announced that 73 per cent of the electorate had voted, with a 94 per cent majority rejecting the involvement of "foreign representatives" in Kosovo.

State television repeatedly showed pictures of fireworks parties and hardline nationalist Radical Party supporters waving Serbian flags.

In Kosovo there was more evidence that Belgrade is going its own way. Thirteen busloads of police were seen on the road from the Albanian border at Dakovica to Kosovo's Drenica heartland. Twenty army lorries were also spotted, and a tank and artillery pieces. The Contact Group's ultimatum for Serbian forces to withdraw from the region by today seemed out of the question.



Dagmar Havel meets the pess yesterday

Havel has further surgery

Innsbruc: Dagmar Havel, the wife of the Czech President, put on a brave face yesterday after doctors at the Universit Clinic of Innsbruck had spoken optimistically abut the progress of her husband, who was taken ill ten ays ago while on holiday i the Austrian Alps.

Mr Hael, 61, underwent a *trachaeomy* yesterday to ease his breathing, hours after doors took him off a respirato.

The President underwent emergene surgery for a ruptured colo and acute peritonitis ten ays ago. His wife has been y his side day and night. *(AP)*

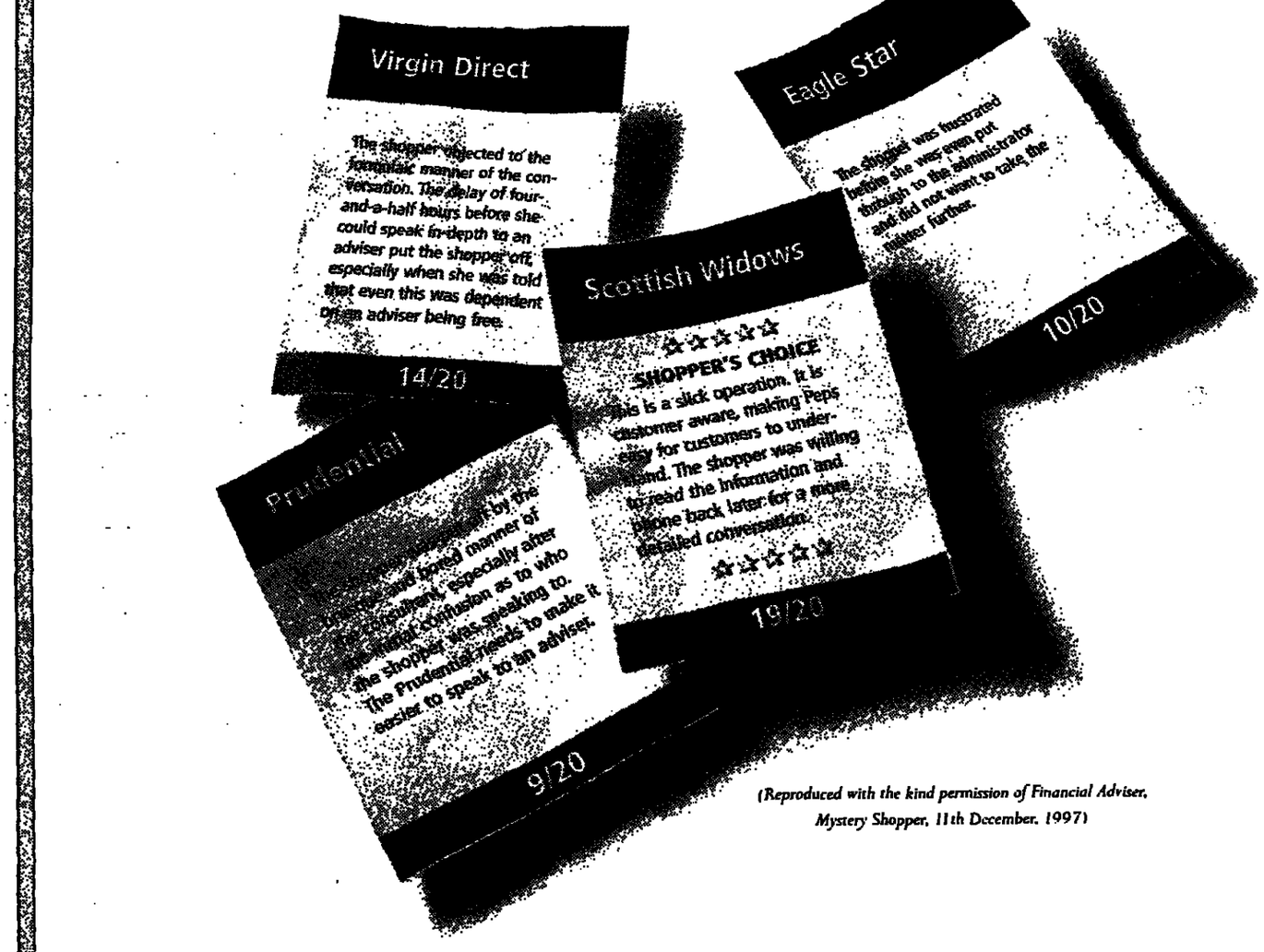
Bonn gives the mark last rites

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN BONN

THE upper house of parliament, the Bundesrat, signed the death warrant of the mark yesterday by completing the legislature's approval for Germany to join the single European currency. The vote was passed by an overwhelming majority, with the eastern state of Saxony the only one of 16 states against German participation.

The Bundesrat met the day after the lower house, the Bundestag, voted by 575 votes to 35, to approve German participation in the euro. Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, now has the backing of both houses ahead of the European Union summit in Brussels on May 1-3 which will confirm the 11 countries which will initially take part in the euro-launch next January. Parliament made its decision despite polls showing that most Germans still do not want the euro.

Herr Kohl again said that the euro was an instrument of cultural and political change, as much as a common currency. It could not guarantee the reduction of unemployment, but could accomplish on a Europe-wide level what the mark had done for Germany as the key to the country's post-war stability.



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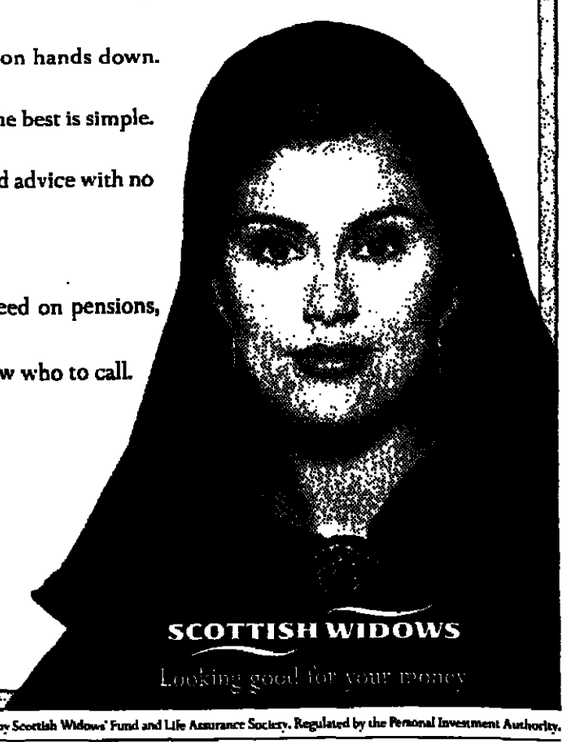
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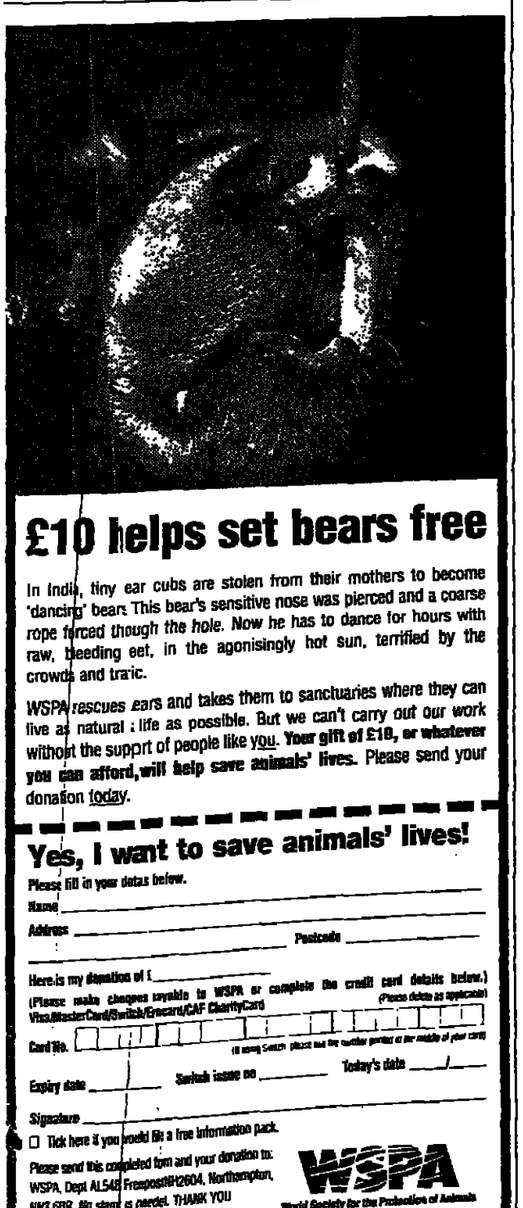
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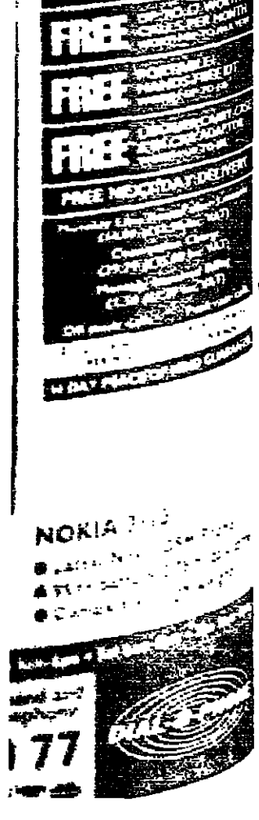
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Whites put faith in hippo grease

FROM SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

ENGLAND'S footballers may have the healing hands of faith healer Eileen Drewery on their side, but the South African national team, known as Bafana Bafana, can harness the secrets of hundreds of African medicine men, who use lion fat and hippopotamus grease to enhance players' performance.

Across Africa, men and women the colonial officials labelled "witch-doctors" have been enjoying a renaissance in popularity. In South Africa, whites are the fastest-growing market for purveyors of lotions and potions to enhance sporting, sexual and business performance.

"At least 80 per cent of all South Africans go to a traditional healer before they go to a doctor. So we are the most important part of primary healthcare," said Seth Seroka, the chairman of the African National Healers' Association.

His consulting rooms, hung with dried monkey and reptile skins, could come from Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. "I can tell you that Bafana Bafana travel with a *nanga* (a male traditional healer). No one wants to come forward to say who it is, because obviously if they don't win or do well, then the healer will lose business." Dr



Haggard: African stories of adventure and sorcery

K. M. Naidoo, a qualified doctor but also a *nanga* and herbal specialist, owns a *muti* (medicine) shop next to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. He said the team's *nanga* would "be using a lot of his own special magic, as well as some we all know. Hippo fat rubbed on the legs is very good for strength."

Dubbed the "white witch-doctor of Africa" after the magic he worked coaching West African sides, Philippe Troussier, the Bafana Bafana coach, last week underwent a cleansing ritual presided over by a *sangoma*, the female equivalent of a *nanga*. At Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's home, he washed his hands in the blood of a goat.

White South Africans are beating hurried paths to the rooms of famous *nangas* and *sangomas*. South Africa has between 250,000 and 300,000 traditional healers, most of them recognised by Mr Seroka's organisation. By comparison there are only 30,000 doctors and 200,000 nurses. Traditional healers have opened their own hospitals. Now sanctioned by the Government, treatment by a *nanga* can be claimed on some health insurance schemes.

"Most of the business we do with whites is about their love lives, or about crime," Mr Seroka said.

One satisfied customer is Linda De Luca, owner of a plant nursery on the outskirts of crime-infested Johannesburg. For about £200 she took out "*muti* insurance". She did not have a burglary or vehicle problem for the two-year period guaranteed by Mr Seroka.

There is a dark side to *muti* too. Scores of women alleged to be "witches" have been driven out of their homes. In Johannesburg, police are investigating the murders of several children for body parts to be used in medicine.



Philippe Troussier, South Africa's football coach, undergoing ritual cleansing in goat's blood at Winnie Mandela's home last week

China's warrior of hope misses farewell to wife

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

XU WENLI, a Chinese human rights activist who has spent 12 years in prison for calling for democracy, drove his wife almost to Beijing airport to catch a flight to New York on her first trip abroad yesterday. His spouse, He Xintong, is due to watch her daughter's college graduation and attend an exhibition of her sculptures.

Mr Xu, one of the original 1978-79 Democracy Wall dissidents who was known in China's jail system as "Special Prisoner 01", said he also wanted to go to New York for the ceremony because he missed much of his 26-year-old daughter's childhood while in prison.

The slightly built, greying man served 11 years in solitary confinement for allegedly "illegally organising a clique to overthrow the Government", and at one stage was not permitted a visit from his wife and daughter for five years. He said he especially wanted to see a 22ft-long sculpture representing a boat, called *Hope*, that his daughter had dedicated to him.

Yet Mr Xu, 54, who has never been abroad, said he feared he would not be permitted to return to China, which he described as "the main battlefield for human rights". To accept exile, he said, was to become irrelevant in China.

In the past six months, the country has released two other leading human rights activists, Wei Jingsheng and Yang Dan, on "medical parole" and sent them into exile in the US. This is being portrayed by the American and EU governments as a positive sign of progress on human rights.

There is also talk among Western diplomats of a new "Beijing Spring", after calls for democracy by academics close to the Chinese Communist Party. Yet dissidents are still being harassed.

Two miles short of the airport yesterday, Mr Xu's secondhand Beijing Jeep was stopped by police, who put his wife into an army car and drove her to the airport.

There, tears in her eyes, Mrs He, 50, said she feared she may not be allowed to return, and would be separated from her husband.

Mr Xu was held for three hours, then fined five yuan (about 40p) for not wearing a seatbelt.

Later, he explained that soon after he was sent to prison his daughter Xu Jin, then nine, made a little ship and sent it to him. She named it "*Hope*, in the hope that her Dad would come home soon and travel the world with her in the little ship". By the time he was freed, she was 21.

☐ **Dissident expelled:** China has expelled Fink Wu Fangcheng, a naturalised US citizen involved in the Chinese dissident movement, the US Embassy said. *(AP)*



Xu Wenli and his wife He Xintong: parted by police

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Red Cross 'did not pay' ransom

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

THE International Committee of the Red Cross has denied that it paid a ransom for ten relief workers who were released on Thursday, nine days after they were kidnapped by one of Somalia's warring factions.

However, Somali elders are reported to have paid $50,000 (£30,000) to the sub-clan in Mogadishu believed to be behind the kidnapping. Most International relief projects in Somalia remain suspended. The hostages, six Europeans, three Africans and an American, were flown to the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. They were said to be in good health but shaken after their ordeal.

They were seized on April 15, shortly after they flew into an airfield in north Mogadishu. ICRC officials said they did not know exactly who carried out the kidnapping, but it appeared to be due to clan rivalry.

Anger over prostitute cash ruling

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI feminists reacted angrily yesterday to a landmark decision to award damages to a 23-year-old road accident victim so that he can pay for prostitutes' services.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Judge Gabriel Kling, in Tel Aviv district court, ruled that the young man, who was severely injured five years ago, is to receive 9.5 million shekels, of which 300,000 (£54,000) was specified to pay for prostitutes.

The victim was paralysed on one side of his body by the accident and partly paralysed on the other. He is now confined to a wheelchair and cannot feed or dress himself.

Ofra Friedman, head of Naamat, the Israeli organisation of working women, said the award was objectionable. It was unthinkable for a court to approve the exploitation of women's bodies for men's sexual satisfaction.

Taleban gives woman 100 lashes in public

FROM REUTERS IN KABUL

DRESSED in the obligatory burqa veil, an Afghan woman in her thirties was publicly lashed 100 times yesterday in the latest crackdown on crime by Afghanistan's purist Islamic Taleban movement.

Women and children were among several thousand spectators who watched a Taleban official lash the woman with a rubber and leather stick for having unlawful sex with a cousin.

Taleban, which says it is on a mission to create the world's purest Islamic state, also cut off the hand of a thief and announced that two brothers had been executed for murder on Thursday. Three Taleban doctors in masks cut off the hand after the young offender had been given a general anaesthetic.

The lashing and the amputation coincided with the arrival in Kabul of a team of European Union diplomats on a mission to discuss aid needs and strained relations with some donor agencies. Punishments have become a regular weekend spectacle in the Afghan capital and are attended by thousands. Yesterday's lashing was the second such public punishment in Kabul by Taleban, and the amputation the fifth since the student militia captured the city in September 1996.

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Etruscans were first to create Pompeii glory

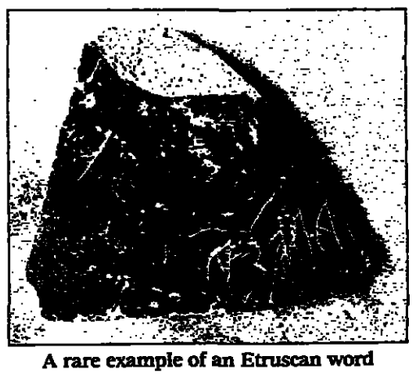
British archaeologists have unearthed evidence of a pre-Roman civilisation, writes **Richard Owen**


CHRIS WARDE-JONES

Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill displays part of an Etruscan artefact found after excavating below the Roman ruins of Pompeii

BRITISH archaeologists digging at Pompeii have uncovered startling evidence that an extensive Etruscan civilisation — hitherto overlooked by scholars — lies beneath the Roman ruins. Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, director of the British School at Rome, said the discovery "revolutionises our concept both of Pompeii and of the reach of Etruscan power six centuries before Christ". He said that "what we think of as ancient Pompeii is in fact Roman New Town. The Etruscans got there first, and in some strength."

Michael Fulford, Professor of Archaeology at Reading University, who is leading the dig in the town's eastern section, said the finds — which include ancient Etruscan foundations as well as pottery — "expand our knowledge of these mysterious people . . . they were clearly very capable town planners, and the Romans seem to have copied much of what they did — after they had obliterated all traces of them."


A rare example of an Etruscan word

The coastal town of Pompeii, which became a Roman possession in 200 BC, was overwhelmed by volcanic lava and ash when Vesuvius erupted in AD 79. As a result, its Roman streets and homes have been preserved, and its superb mosaics and other objects — including the bodies of those who died in the eruption — have fascinated visitors since excavations began in the late 18th century.

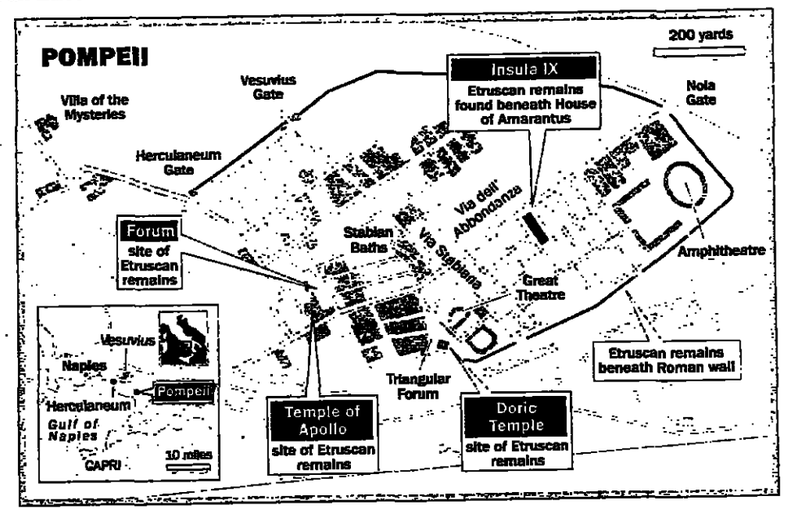
However, Professor Wallace-Hadrill has campaigned for measures to "limit the impact on Pompeii" of mass tourism and the British team, under his direction, has excavated sites "away from the tourist attractions" over the past four years. Two years ago the team — funded by Enterprise Oil and the European Union — uncovered "The House of Amarantus", a 1st century AD Roman house built around a courtyard, or atrium, which at the time of the eruption belonged to a wine merchant. Digging below pavement level, the archaeologists found a gold signet ring belonging to the merchant, the preserved bodies of a mule and a dog, and hundreds of Greek amphorae or wine jars.

At a conference entitled "Piecing Together Pompeii" yesterday Professor Fulford announced that the team had decided to dig "deeper still", and to their astonishment had found that there were Etruscan walls and foundations beneath the Roman courtyard. There were also remains not only of Greek jars and vases which the Etruscans imported "in vast quantities", but also of native Etruscan pottery, which is heavier and chunkier than the more delicate Greek pottery, and has a high-gloss black finish. "There is an astonishing amount wherever you look," he said. One of the fragments of an imported Greek vase bears a rare example of Etruscan writing, which used the Greek alphabet written backwards. "It seems to be the name of the owner, but we only have the last five characters, reading APESA," Professor Wallace-Hadrill said. Evidence of the Etruscans at Pompeii has hitherto been scant, and confined to the central area around the Forum and the Temple of Apollo.

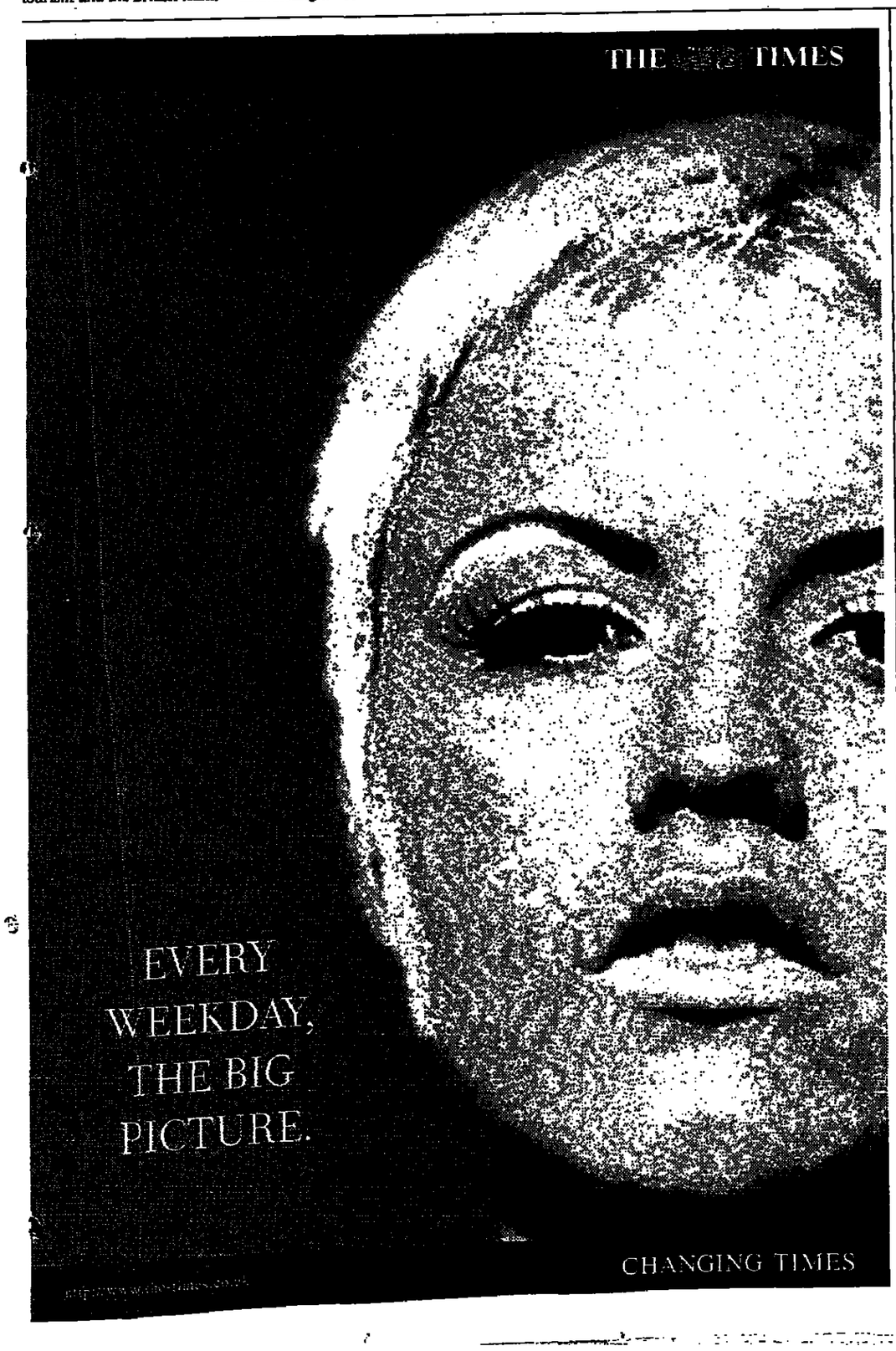
Professor Wallace-Hadrill said: "It was assumed they had one or two cult centres which became Roman temples, and that the real glory of Pompeii was the result of later Roman expansion, with the blocks of housing to the east of the Forum built on a Roman rectilinear grid pattern. But our evidence is that the whole grid was Etruscan."

The Etruscans, as D H Lawrence noted in *Etruscan Places* (1932), were the victims of a Roman genocide so effective that almost no traces of them remain except for their spectacular tombs. "The Etruscans, as everyone knows, were the people whom the Romans — in their usual neighbourly fashion — wiped out entirely to make room for Rome with a very big R," Lawrence wrote sardonically. It is not even clear where they came from: Aristotle and Herodotus believed they were immigrants from Greece or Anatolia, but others think they were indigenous. Their name — according to George Dennis, the 19th century scholar and traveller who revived interest in them — probably derives from the root "tur", or tower (which survives today in Tyrrhenian Sea and Tuscany). The evidence suggests they were farmers, fishermen and iron-workers, made gifts to the gods in their temples, designed elaborate gold jewellery (and false teeth), and constructed superb roads and irrigation systems at a time when Rome was a village.


Professor Michael Fulford helps to clean fragments



But by 396 BC the Romans were powerful enough to capture Veio, the Etruscan stronghold just north of Rome, and raze it to the ground. The Emperor Honorius ordered the destruction of all Etruscan books, with such effect that no Etruscan literature survives. Some 13,000 inscriptions have been found, but only a few hundred words are understood. Professor Wallace-Hadrill said the main focus of Etruscan power had been north of Rome, between the Tiber and the Arno, with 12 city states forming the federation of Etruria. Traces remain at Tarquinia, Cerveteri and other towns. "But it is becoming clear that the Etruscans also had significant outposts in the south," he said.



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Adopted daughter has passed disease to children, says estranged husband

'Aids' hits family of Mia Farrow

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

MIA FARROW'S unconventional family was confronting a new crisis yesterday after a report that one of the children she adopted with composer Andre Previn is suffering from Aids, and two of her grandchildren are HIV-positive.

Lark Previn McKinzie, 25, a sister of Woody Allen's wife Soon-Yi, was admitted briefly to a private room in a New York hospital this week suffering from pneumonia, and her estranged husband says she and their two daughters are infected with HIV.

"It doesn't look good for her," Christopher McKinzie, her estranged husband, told the American tabloid *Star* magazine. "I'm afraid of going to bed and waking up and they'll tell me that she's gone."

Mr McKinzie said Lark had become infected with HIV when the couple were tattooed by a local artist who used infected needles. He says she unwittingly passed the infection to her unborn children — Sara, now three, and Christine, 16 months.

He said Lark's weight had plummeted to 6 st, 3 lbs. Sara had been hospitalised twice with infections, but Christine had yet to suffer any symptoms. Mother and daughters have run up $230,000 (£143,000) in medical bills, putting them on public assistance. "All Lark can think about are the girls," he said. "She doesn't want to leave them."

A construction worker who spent six years with Lark before she moved out with the children last year, Mr McKinzie said he believed he was also HIV-positive, but "hasn't had the nerve to get tested yet."

Friends of Ms Farrow suspect that Mr McKinzie sold his story to the tabloid to take revenge on Lark for leaving him.

His comments outraged Lark's godmother, Maria Roach, who said she did not know details of Lark's illness. "If it's a lie, it's a terrible thing to say," she said. "If it's the truth, it's a horrible thing to capitalise on. What kind of father would do this to his children?"

Ms Farrow and Mr Previn issued a statement that neither confirmed nor denied the claims. "We love and are totally supportive of our daughter, Lark, who ... is now recovering at home," they said.

"It is unfortunate that Lark's estranged husband and the father of her children has chosen this critical time to exploit their children and extended family."

Lark, who once wanted to become a paediatric nurse, is one of six children from Ms Farrow's failed marriage to Mr Previn — three of whom were adopted. Like her sister Daisy, Lark was a Vietnamese orphan adopted when the family lived in a farmhouse in Surrey. The two married brothers, Soon-Yi, who is slightly older, was adopted later from Korea.

Ms Farrow — one of seven offspring of Maureen O'Sullivan, the Irish actress who played Jane to Johnny Weissmuller's Tarzan — has already seen the defection of Soon-Yi to Mr Allen.

In her autobiography, *What Falls Away*, Ms Farrow, the star of *Rosemary's Baby*, recalls adopting Lark in May 1973, almost as an act of protest against the Vietnam War. "The senselessness of Andre and I having another baby when already there were so many children in the world needing homes was dramatically underlined by the war, as it stretched on interminably," she wrote. "Every morning's newspaper brought fresh documentation of human suffering. It was in this climate that we decided to adopt a Vietnamese war orphan."

Handed over at a Paris airport with just an empty baby bottle and a Vietnamese passport, Lark was an asthmatic baby who weighed only five pounds and had survived two bouts of pneumonia. "She was the most exquisite little girl we had ever seen," Ms Farrow wrote.

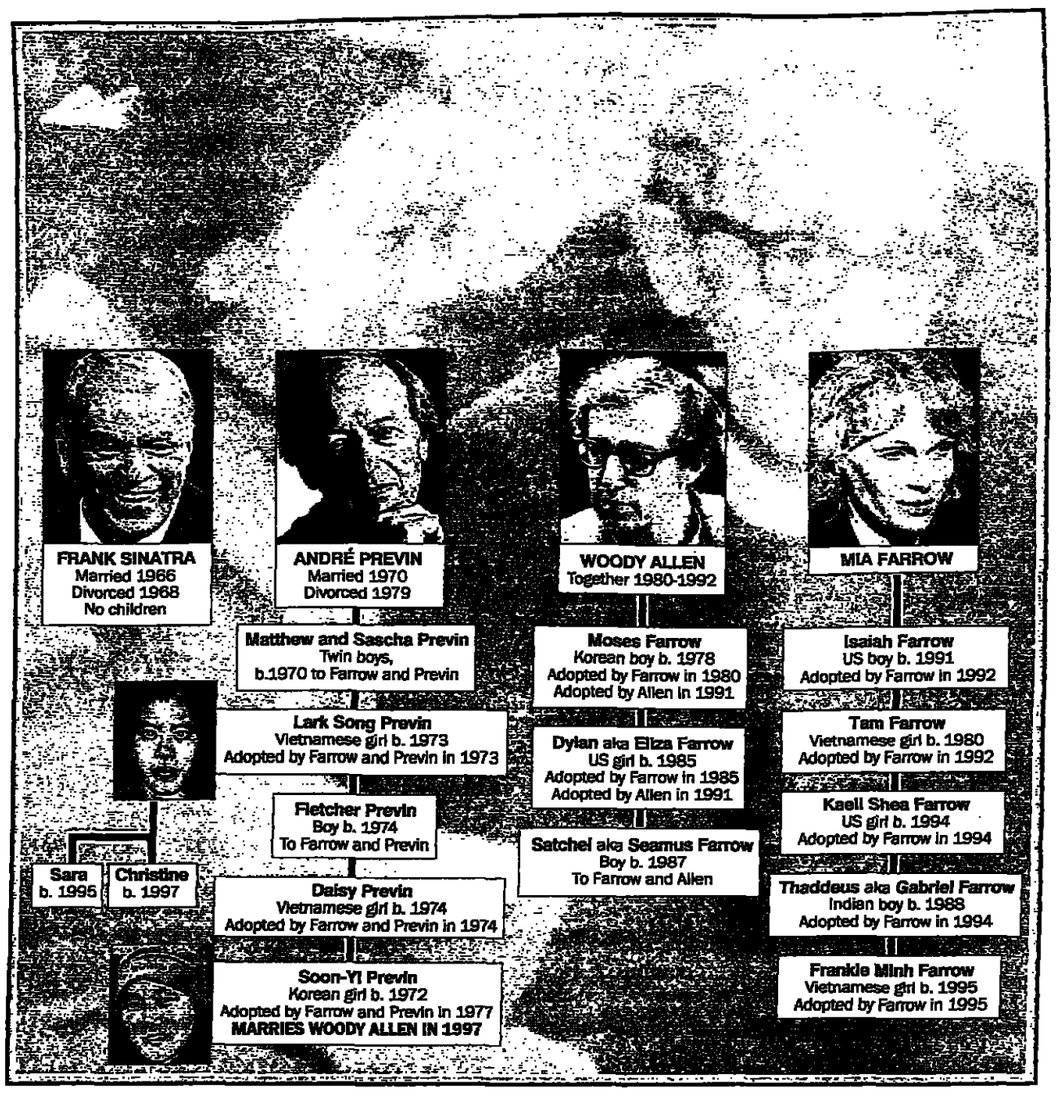
> We thought she was the most exquisite little girl that we had ever seen

Lark seldom sees Mr Previn, who was divorced from Ms Farrow in 1979. Reports that she is estranged from her mother are inaccurate.

According to a family friend, Lark had one lung removed last year and had contracted pneumonia in the other one.

Maureen O'Sullivan has helped her out financially by giving her $4,000 to move her family out of their shabby second-floor flat in a poor neighbourhood in Brooklyn.

Ms Farrow is said to have been devastated by her adopted daughter's illness. At one point, she took her two granddaughters home with her to look after them alongside the seven adopted children she still has living with her, several of whom suffer from disabilities, including blindness and cerebral palsy.



Lesbian Ellen comes out of show



FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

NEXT month, America's most prominent lesbian will lose the sit-com that made her famous.

Ellen DeGeneres, who kissed another woman in front of 36 million television viewers in the very week that she "came out" in real life, has been told by ABC that her eponymous series will not be renewed next year.

Falling ratings and discomfort among viewers over Ellen's overwhelmingly gay subject matter have been blamed for its cancellation after five seasons.

"I loved doing the show every week," DeGeneres told yesterday's *Daily Variety*.

"This was an important chapter in my life, and although I'm disappointed the show was cancelled I look forward to moving beyond the stereotype."

Critics have suggested that the series might have lasted longer had it moved beyond its own gay stereotype earlier.

The famous "coming out" episode, broadcast in America last April, was a carefully orchestrated ratings coup and a critical success: its writers later won an Emmy.

But Ellen's plot lines have focused on its star's problems as an open homosexual, leading many to dismiss it as a "one-joke show".



O'Sullivan: has helped family to move home

Critics say Allen film portrait is PR stunt

New York: Woody Allen is making a sly effort to win back public support after his marriage to Lark Previn McKinzie's sister, the young woman he jokingly calls "the notorious Soon-Yi Previn" (James Bone writes)

New York got its first glimpse this week inside the couple's romance in a new film by the Oscar-winning documentary-maker Barbara Kopple, called *Wild Man Blues*. The film, to be released in London on May 8, captures fly-on-the-wall footage of the couple on a European tour with Allen's jazz band. Already, however, New Yorkers are questioning whether the film is just propaganda for the comedian.

"A slick corporate film plugging Allen," one critic complained. "A public relations corrective," sniped another. The documentary stirred debate because the first potential director, Jerry Zwigoff, rejected the project when Allen refused him the right to the "final cut".

Ms Kopple insists she was given total freedom. But in an interview, she was vague about Allen's motives in allowing such a close-up portrait. "I never asked, 'How did you decide to do this?' because it did not matter to me," she said.

Ms Kopple filmed Allen for between 16 and 18 hours a day during the 23-day trip in 1996 and made him wear a wireless microphone all the time. During stopovers in Madrid, Paris, Milan, Bologna and at the Dorchester in London, she catches Allen and his bride-to-be eating breakfast in their bathrobes, swimming in a hotel pool, canoodling in a gondola and even lying in bed together.

With sometimes surprising candour, the young Korean calls her famously scruffy husband a "nerd". This is the first time that an audience has really heard Soon-Yi speak," Ms Kopple said. "She says things he does not necessarily want to hear. She is a person who is not overwhelmed by his celebrity, and it's a real relationship."



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VALERIE GROVE MEETS: NICK REILLY

Mountain man in the driving seat

MARTIN BEDDALL



Nick Reilly: "Every individual is as worthy as any other and just because you've got a certain position doesn't mean you make a more important contribution"

Well, it seems to have worked. Nick Reilly is the Vauxhall Motors chairman who offered to give up his £1o0,000 salary for a year if the workers would accept a new three-year pay deal and, on Thursday, they voted three to one in favour.

So I drove out to Luton to see this not-so-fat cat. Crawling up the M1 at 2mph, I had plenty of time to do a bit of car-spotting en route. Alongside me in the fast lane (3mph), it was Vauxhalls all the way: a Vectra, an Astra, another Astra, another Vectra ... aren't there too many cars on the roads already?

Mr Reilly is a big broad Welshman of 48 who — naturally — likes rugby and beer and singing and drives a dark blue Vectra. If the most famous thing about him is the straitened year that lies ahead, the second most famous thing is that he once went off to sit on a Welsh hillside to rethink his life.

He was 25 then, a young man who had so far had very little to trouble him. He grew up in his parents' hotel, the Beach Hotel at Trearddur Bay, Anglesey, "a happy place since most people were on holiday". From his prep school he won a scholarship to Harrow, and



from there went up to St Catharine's College, Cambridge, to read economics. He joined a Manchester stockbroker but, after three years, chucked it in to go and sit on a snowy mountain in Llangollen.

It was just at the tail end of the hippie era and he did grow a beard — slightly gingery — and really did live the vagrant life from November to March, alone in an isolated hut, supposedly uninhabitable during the winter: he fed sheep for the local farmer, walked, read, wrote down his thoughts and cogitated on what life was all about. He says everyone should do this once in their lives if they get the chance.

The conclusion he reached was that ambition was a dangerous chimera. "What happens when you reach your ambition? You have nowhere to go. I recognise that ambition drives some people, but I realised that not having a specific ambition is actually more helpful: it liberates you; it means that, when difficult decisions have to be made, you're willing to take personal risks without worrying about ruining your ambition.

"And what came home to me was the value of people and the fact that every individual is as worthy as any other, and just because you've got a certain position doesn't mean you make a more important contribution than anyone else. The trick is to find a way of maximising everyone's contribution."

He also decided he wanted a job where there was an end product, something tangible. He'd have to go into industry. He went down from the mountain to play in a rugger match and saw an advertisement for a financial analyst at General Motors' diesel engine factory in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. They took him, despite the beard.

He was quite keen on cars, though not as fanatical as his elder brother. As an undergraduate he drove a VW Beetle painted pink, "the original Love Bug".

He has been with General Motors (which owns the venerable British Vauxhall) ever since, and was the first Briton to be made a vice-president. He has worked in Antwerp, Detroit, Mexico and Zurich. The Mexican episode was pioneering stuff in 1981, taking workers out of the fields and training them, bridging a vast cultural divide and setting up Motor Diesel Mexicana.

He met his wife, Sue, when he went to live at Southwick Hall, a medieval country house in Northamptonshire; the squire's widow stipulated that he had to show visitors around when the house opened to the public, and sing in the local choir. Sue, a schoolteacher, had another flat in the same house. They married in 1976 and have three children aged 17 to 20.

"Pay dispute" ... "threatened closure of plant" ... "loss of 10,000 jobs" — the last few weeks have been reminiscent of the 1970s: long hours of negotiations between management and workers. These came to a conclusion on Thursday with the announcement that the staff had agreed to the deal offering pay rises of 3 per cent this year, 3.5 per cent next — but in 2000 offers an increase pegged to the inflation rate, with a possible extra half per cent if the exchange rate for the pound falls below DM2.70. Apparently, Gordon Brown approves.

It had been, Reilly said, a defining moment in Vauxhall's history. The possibility that one of the British plants might close was very real. "At our headquarters in Zurich, where GM International make all the big investment decisions for Europe, I sit on the European strategy board. The car currently made in Luton, the Vectra, is also made in Germany and Belgium. We plan the next model years ahead.

"So, when the business case was being made for the new model, one serious consideration was to produce the same volume in only two instead of the three plants. That obviously posed a threat. Our plant is the most vulnerable of the three. First, it is the smallest. Secondly, the Belgian plant already produces two models and couldn't be lost; the German plant is also the home of another model. That left us potentially vulnerable. We had a cost advantage, but the rise in the pound meant we have lost that advantage."

The announcement about his salary was a serious proposal, not a stunt. "We had to bring forward a wage settlement due in September — and get across to them that, if we didn't talk about the long term now, urgently, there was a risk that there wouldn't be a long term." He decided to write to each of the 10,000 workers about forgoing his salary while senior managers took a pay freeze.

The TGWU man, Tony Woodley, has called this a cynical gesture that had no impact on the negotiations. But Reilly prefers to believe it made an impact. "They knew exactly where I was sitting. We needed to demonstrate that we were on the same side of the table.

"They were difficult negotiations, quite tough at times. But not divisive or negative. The atmosphere was good, each side respected the other, and maybe that gesture went some way to set that climate. There was no old-style confrontation. Both sides were professional and positive. We were working for the same ends. I don't suppose the unions would say my offer influenced the outcome, but it meant there was no question of my team's personal commitment."

Now, he said, both Luton and Ellesmere Port plants were working full-time and overtime on Saturdays. Ellesmere Port had just launched a new Astra, the Vectra was selling well, and everyone was now secure.

But how will the Reilly family live? On his performance-related bonus? "Well, the bonus is not guaranteed. But it came back to my old question — what is important? It is much more important to maintain this manufacturing operation, even if it means forgoing quite a bit of money." He has no mortgage, as his family's house in Hertfordshire is rented. The three children — one still at school, and a son hoping to go to drama school — are his main expense.

The loyal Sue ("Wife backs chief's pay cut") has also faced a mid-life decision. She once ran her own primary school, and has always taken teaching jobs wherever they lived. But now she has reskilled herself as a photographer and is about to set up in business.

Reilly says the corporate round of airports and international meetings has no great attraction for him: it leaves him longing for solitary walks in mountains. "That's why we keep a place in the French Alps. A little chalet. We go there as much for walking in summer as for skiing."

Yesterday he flew to Dublin for a dealer conference. I contrasted the charms of Dublin with the prospect of spending the weekend with a crowd of motor dealers. A very masculine world, I murmured. He said they had one woman on their franchise board, and he thought it a shame that more women did not think of going into the motor trade via graduate recruitment schemes.

And he went off looking weary and grey, hoarse after weeks of talking, but convinced he has helped to sustain an embattled manufacturing sector — "we can't be a service-only economy" — until the millennium, at least.

Shining Domingo eclipsed by knight

OPERA

Parsifal

Festival Hall

It takes a fairly spectacular leap of the imagination to transform a brightly lit Festival Hall into Wagner's Hall of the Grail. But Placido Domingo gallantly invited us to make that leap as he looked round the ceiling in wonder on arrival in the Grail Hall in Act I of the concert performance of *Parsifal* on Thursday.

The acoustics of the Festival Hall, too, hardly compare with those in the Bayreuth Festspielhaus, for which the opera was written. But what may have been lacking in mysticism was more than made up in other qualities of this superbly sung and played Royal Opera performance.

The star draw was no doubt Domingo, and he did not disappoint with his first *Parsifal* in London. In astonishingly youthful voice, he enacted an entirely convincing "innocent fool", deliriously tormented in the Act II confrontation with Kundry, crushingly remorseful in the final act.

But heartfelt as was the reception he received, it was eclipsed by the thunderous ovation accorded John Tomlinson — deservedly so, since the British bass gave the performance of a lifetime in the role of the veteran knight Gurnemanz.

Enunciating every syllable with crystal clarity, employing teeth and lips to maximise immediacy, he proved an excellent storyteller, animating his narration with a buoyant, vibrant line. Grey-bearded and wholly immersed in the part, Tomlinson in full flight was a thing of wonder.

Wild-eyed and moaning realistically, Deborah Polaski was no less inside the role of Kundry. Curiously, in the one piece of staging attempted, Domingo crossed the performing area to succumb to the feminine wiles of the enchantress, only to pull away before Polaski could deliver the fateful smacker.

The Flowermaidens, led by the winning Catrin Wyn Davies, were truly fragrant seductresses, giving the lie to the notion that Wagner's scene could seriously have been influenced by the production of *Mother Goose* he saw in London. The latter is stated as fact, incidentally, by Domingo no less, in an intriguing film about *Parsifal* by Tony Palmer — which should have been, but will not be, shown on British television.

With his malevolently consonant-spitting Klingsor, Sergei Leiferkus added another colourful villain to his repertoire. Jukka Rasilainen was a fine Amfortas, and smaller roles and chorus parts were all rendered excellently.

The textural refinement of the orchestral playing under Heinz Fricke was beyond praise. To my ears, the Grail music of Act I lacked sublimity, while asperities were generally smoothed out, but by Act III, the sheer calibre of the playing was undeniable.

BARRY MILLINGTON

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Bearding the lion in its den

Edmund Penning-Rowsell has a new proposal to save Venice

Glorious Venice is under serious threat. This week the Venice in Peril Fund stuck its neck out to demand action from the Italian Government — and soon. The interminable delays in protecting the historic city from flooding and other hazards mean that its splendid fabric is rapidly deteriorating. At the same time the cities population is in continuing decline. Surely we don't want a ghost-town by 2050, which, in a Venetian timescale, is just a few years away.

Venice has always flooded. The Venetians chose their splendid but precarious site in the Veneto Lagoon because it offered protection from their mainland enemies. The more water the better was the 14th-century view. But the flooding is now getting worse, driven by rising sea-levels caused by climate change. At the start of the 20th century, St Mark's Square flooded seven times a year; now it floods about 50 times. With current trends by 2050 the Square will be flooded on average every day and disastrous floods, such as in 1966, will occur at least every 25 years. If one extends the climate change scenario beyond this date, large parts of Venice would have to be abandoned by the 22nd century.

A decision must be made, but it must be the right decision. So far one decision has been crucially wrong. The Law of Venice, passed after the 1966 disaster, said movable floodgates must be erected across the three entrances to the Lagoon from the Adriatic. This solution was fixed before the gates were designed or appraised — before our full awareness of rising sea-levels. One can only speculate as to the vested interests that created this legislative straitjacket.

The gates now look like an unacceptable and wildly extravagant "quick fix" (even though they will last for at least 50 years). Why? Because were they to be built, and nothing else were done, by 2050 they would have to be closed every day. This is impossible. There would be a huge build-up of pollution in the Lagoon because Venice has no sewers and domestic sewage is simply dumped in the canals. Fertiliser draining into the Lagoon would also pose a problem and navigation into Italy's fifth biggest port would be disrupted.

The gates are far too expensive and tackle symptoms not causes. Estimates vary but the total works amount to some £3.6 billion. To justify that, the city would have to suffer flood damage costing an average £200 million a year. Yet damage is a tiny fraction of this sum, because so far the sensible Venetians have responded to the floods by moving their residential rooms upstairs. Even the damage that remains could be reduced substantially if the *Comune* subsidised far more smallscale flood works and pumping schemes for individual buildings, walkways and squares. This is not easy, but £3.6 billion is at stake. These smallscale flood works are highly cost-effective, but they mean that the economic case for the gates evaporates.

However, with a continuing rise in sea-levels, this smallscale approach will eventually fail. We need a multifaceted strategy which, over the next 50 years, should include plans and investment to reduce the pollution from Venice through sewage treatment and agricultural controls. We need to halt and reverse the erosion in the Lagoon by recreating more marshlands. We also need investment to develop the city's economy and a scheme to move port traffic elsewhere.

Then it will be possible to begin to isolate the Lagoon progressively from the sea: the key objective. This can be done, not with hugely expensive gates, but with more sustainable coastal works designed to constrict the entrances and prevent the flood surges from reaching the city. The Lagoon needs to be converted back to being more like a coastal marsh, rather than a stormy inland sea, so that the marsh provides a natural, self-sustaining sponge-like buffer between the city and the Adriatic.

Floodgates seem a wildly extravagant 'quick fix'

All this will take concerted effort and considerable time; the flooding will lessen only as the Lagoon is isolated from the sea. In the meantime, smallscale works can prevent the disruption and damage caused by minor floods, and proper contingency planning can be carried out for the major events.

Decisions are needed now to embrace this broader approach and begin the public consultation necessary to convince the Venetians — wary of environmental damage to their Lagoon — that something must be done: so far they have wisely opposed the gates-dominated "solution".

We also need institutional change, not least to break the insidious link between the evaluation of what should be done and the construction of any engineering works, so that the potential profits inherent in the latter do not cloud the judgment of the former. To replace the conflict that is endemic in the fragmented Italian political system, we need a genuine patnership between the local, regional and central authorities, so that real action results within a framework that works. The Italian Government needs to show leadership here: that is what government is for.

The author is Professor of Geography at Middlesex University.

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY



The auction of relics at Avignon, an 1821 work attributed to Thomas Rowlandson. The charm of relics is that they embody our memories

The cult of clutter

We may not believe in holy shrouds but we cling to mementoes of our past. The worth of an object is not the same as its price

Simon Jenkins

This week a cabinet of proprietory medicines was sold in London for £188,500. The sale offers new hope to the hard-pressed National Health Service. Its mountain of costly drugs looks cheap at the price, and could be unloaded onto the market to reduce waiting lists. The NHS need only get Damien Hirst, owner of the medicine cabinet, to sign the inventory and Christie's to handle the sale. Mr Hirst and Christie's might then offer to dispose of Britain's surplus cows.

The "art" market is currently being flooded with objects whose worth lies not in their aesthetic appeal but in their previous ownership. After the sale of Jackie Onassis "memorabilia" in 1996 came the memorabilia of the Duchess of Windsor, Marlene Dietrich and John F. Kennedy, and the dresses of Diana, Princess of Wales. An ice-bucket is an ice-bucket, unless given to Dietrich by Douglas Fairbanks. A brush is a brush, unless it stroked the hair of a duchess. A car boot sale is just that, unless the contents are from the attics of the Dukes of Northumberland. Then they call forth the attention of Sotheby's.

This week it was the turn of Hackwood House in Hampshire to break the record for a country house auction. The success was attributed by experts to the house's former occupation by the Dukes of Bolton and the Viscounts Camrose. The auctioneers hyped the collection as being "a wonderful accumulation of the generations of two families". The point of the sale was to destroy this accumulation, but that seemed to add lustre to the occasion. Buyers would have to pay extra to be in at the death. As the dealer Christopher Gibbs was quoted as saying, prices that fetched double and treble their estimates indicated "a splendid display of human folly".

This depends on what we mean by folly. Any man who can predict the buying habits of the rich is on his way to a fortune. As art market indexes show, prices can go down as well as up, even if auction houses seldom publicise the fact. Last autumn's sale of Impressionists owned by Evelyn Sharp, a little-known New York collector, was a disaster. The market value of a work of art appeared to lie not in who created it but in the notability of the owner. What sent a price into the stratosphere was the provenance, the added thumbprint of fame. Was this picture really owned by Churchill, or that sculpture by Napoleon? Ignore the work, look at the catalogue entry.

A maxim of auctioneering is that a price does not depend on the critical worth of an object but on the depth of the pockets of the two last bidders. The rich delight in costly pleasures. They acquire racehorses that do not win, yachts that never sail, houses that lie empty and wives that break the bank. Others may regard such spending as folly. I find it more charitable to assume that those with a talent for amassing money are no less careful in enjoying its disposal. The first Lord Thomson spent a fortune on owning *The Times*: I imagine his grandson derives equal pleasure from buying paintings by Constable. Someone will doubtless enjoy having Mr Hirst's medicine cabinet on his (bathroom?) wall, if only as a conversation piece. Critics and custodians may debate its worth as "art". The job of the marketplace is to answer a simpler question, what is the price?

The price of a Hirst cabinet as of April 1998 is astronomical. This price was certainly enhanced by being realised in a Christie's auction room — which is where rich people enjoy buying — and by Mr Hirst's catalogue entry. This reads: "I've always seen medicine cabinets as bodies, but also like a cityscape or civilisation, with some sort of hierarchy within it." Perhaps the purchaser will slip this *aperçu* into the cabinet along with the Zovirax and Senecot, as an aid to conversation. But, who knows, this reverentially reprinted drivel may in centuries to come feature as an "original" catalogue entry, dating from 1998 when the great man was still active. I wonder what price a 17th-century Dutch catalogue would fetch today, printed with Vermeer's own account of his early works.

The charm of taste is that there is no knowing down which eccentric paths it may lead. This is a market not in art but in relics. The essence of such relics lies in embodying memory, whether personal or national. Sotheby's recently held a sale of bits of racing cars. Under the hammer went mudguards, headlamps, broken wing mirrors, fenders and crash helmets. The sole interest of what was palpably junk lay in whether Fangio or Moss or Senna was driving the relevant contraption in a named race. Thousands of pounds rested on the provenance, which for racing enthusiasts held deep historical resonance.

This resonance is no different from that of Dietrich fans seeking to own her cocktail-shaker or Diana fans buying her frocks. Nor is it different from the Scots' delight in receiving back a lump of limestone known as the Stone of Scone. Nor is it different from the Vicar of Glastonbury sending the Queen each year a sprig of thorn from his churchyard. The Holy Thorn is said to be a clone of the legendary bush brought to Somerset from the original Crown of Thorns by St Joseph of Arimathea. One man's litter is another's souvenir, and yet another's sacred relic. The finger of the saint, the lock of hair, the chip of wood, the old guitar will, with an appropriate dusting of history, have thousands paying homage.

This week tens of thousands lined up to see the Turin Shroud, its fame apparently undented by its proven lack of authenticity. It is now famous as a fake, focus for faith misplaced. Two years ago a French "Thomas à Becket" casket had to be saved for the British nation at a price justified only by its being designed to hold a relic of the saint, whether it ever did or not. A Japanese businessman has been told that his Van Gogh *Sunflowers* may also be a fake. He could equally feel cheated by his advisers, or vindicated in his taste for a lovely, if anonymous, painting. Or he may relish the ownership of the world's most expensive fake. Even the unauthentic can be a relic, if we try hard enough.

We must not take these parallels too far. The modern cult of the museum is often equated with the medieval cult of pilgrimage. But pilgrimage was never a medieval Cook's tour, nor was the reverence shown to relics mere art mania. Pilgrims went seriously about a dangerous business, in the sincere belief that worshipping at the shrines of relics would win salvation. As Kenneth Clark pointed out in *Civilisation*, nobody could climb the hill to Vezelay, stand under its great vault and think of the early pilgrims as National Gallery tourists. We admire the Mona Lisa, but not as crusaders revered what they thought to be relics of the True Cross. Those who venerated icons in hallowed places might be misguided, but their lives were too short and their mission too urgent to dally with aesthetics.

Most of us have lost faith in relics as agents of salvation, as former cultures lost faith in trees and winds. But we have not lost faith in them as embodying our personal or collective identity. This faith is often derided by left-wing Blimps as a lugubrious and unhealthy obsession with the past. In his *Theatres of Memory*, the late Raphael Samuel brilliantly satirised the disdain for "heritage" of snooty intellectuals (which he identified with *The Independent*), who held that "the masses if left to their own devices are moronic, that their pleasures are unthinking, their tastes cheapo and nasty". These critics saw affection for ersatz relics of British history as "inviting spurious identifications, robbing the past of its terrors and turning it into an ideal home". In their view, said Samuel, the public should be forced to take a cold bath of social realism each morning.

Mercifully the public is resistant to such patronising tosh. Faith in the artefacts of the past, however trivial, is faith in whatever archaeology we find most congenial. This is the faith that auction houses are now exploiting. We may no longer believe in holy shrouds, but we cling to Stones of Scone, royal mugs, football shirts, the trinkets of stardom and the personal memorabilia of family and friends. The first thing we save from a burning house is the photograph album. Photographs are the archaeology of Everyman. They are how we beat out the intimate rhythm of time. Like Steinbeck's migrant sharecroppers, grabbing at souvenirs as they are herded into the truck, "How else do we know it's us, without our past".

All froth and no ambience

Cafés should be comforting, says **Julie Myerson**

There was a time when I, as a writer, could happily go from bed to desk and start work. But these days that makes me inexplicably sad. The solution? I go to a café, where I think and read and steel myself to go home and face the blank page.

Café Rouge — across the Common — is good for a long (two cappuccino) read. Even better is a little French place off the high street where I meet a writer friend after our respective school-runs. There we sip *café au lait* until — egos boosted and spirits lifted — we dash guiltily back to our novels. But aren't writers entitled to a bit of café life? After all, Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir didn't even have to brave the school playground, and they still consoled themselves in the Left Bank's Deux Magots before returning home to face the page and the intractable word.

At the top of Hampstead High Street is the Coffee Cup, Seventies hangout of Nobel prizewinner Elias Canetti who, perpetuating the habits of his Viennese youth, went there to write when he was living in London. The poets Pablo Neruda and Joseph Brodsky visited regularly too. Great thought and great art were hatched there. But now Camden council wants to develop and enlarge the site as a "bistro". Change it? Surely 20th-century London boasts few enough Nobel Laureates of its own? Shouldn't the Coffee Cup get a blue plaque and a preservation order instead? Eagerly, I visited, expecting to feel jealous, awed, inspired.

The Coffee Cup inhabits a wobbly-looking Grade II-listed building, which nestles wearily between a couple of new bruschetta-and-aluminium eating places. Despite a sliver of sunshine outside, the dark wood-panelled interior is lit by shaded wall lamps. Dusty artificial flowers and red, plastic-backed menus recall a million small-town tea-shops.

Are the clients artists? Well, over there a man is reading *Loaded*. A Japanese couple in anoraks are eating prawn salad by the window. A woman with lavender hair pulls her Ryman's carrier bags close against her legs. And my cappuccino? Tasteless and watery, despite its half-heartedly ruffled surface.

Hampstead residents are campaigning to save the Coffee Cup — presumably their affection stems from years of good times there which an outsider can't appreciate. But what I — and I expect many other writers — want from a café is decent, strong super-hot coffee (you can read at least six pages of a novel before you take your first sip); a big, comfortable room where you can slink in and grab your favourite table without having to inquire about anyone's health. Peace, but people to watch and — how vital this is — a feeling that you can sit on, long after your cup's empty, without being hassled.

I stayed in the Coffee Cup only fifteen minutes. I didn't like my cappuccino enough to finish it, but the waitress was quite happy to whisk it — and my money — away without much ado. If Hampstead residents succeed in keeping the Coffee Cup open it will be for nostalgia's sake, for it simply isn't competing with current market forces. It is all very romantic to sit on a seat once sat on by Neruda or Brodsky, but all the ghostly presences in the world can't inspire a writer simply longing for a break and a good cup of coffee.

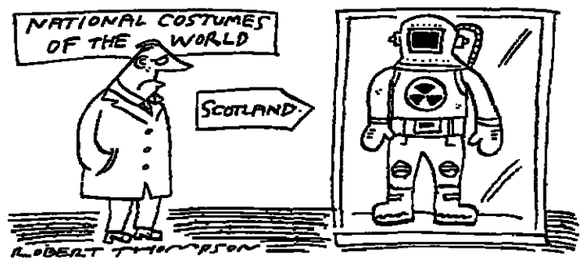
The author's novel Me and the Fat Man *is published by Fourth Estate.*

Knocked out

TONY BANKS has discovered that cricket has nothing on boxing when it comes to sexism. At the last minute the Sports Minister cancelled his plan to attend the Boxing Writers' Club annual bash at the Savoy after he found he could not take a female guest. The world champion pugilists, including Barry McGuigan and Charlie Magri, were informed that Banksie had withdrawn as guest speaker "due to considerations of political correctness". This crude attack on our splendid minister produced beery laughs from the grim throng. Tania Follett, the first British female boxing manager (pictured with Banks), is in Tony's corner. "It is stupid that my fighters can attend and I can't. Boxing is a gentleman's club." Well, a club.



The 250 guests were regaled instead by Jimmy "I. R." Wray, Banks's controversial Labour colleague. The Glasgow MP, who resoundingly denied claims from Catherine, his estranged wife, that she received a few swift right hooks during their marriage, pulled no punches: "It was a bit like a stag night," says the former middleweight. "Women would find old pals getting together talking about old fights very boring. I have no problem with women attending but they could have their own dinner where they can talk about their intimate problems." A shade old Labour, me thinks.



● *WORLD Book Day clearly hasn't reached Hollywood. Script treatments for the new film of* Lolita, *starring Jeremy Irons as Humbert Humbert, passed through the dexterous hands of David Mamet and Harold Pinter before Stephen Schiff was entrusted. Mamet explains why he was rebuffed: "I call up Dick Zanuck, the producer, and I say, 'What's the matter?' He says, 'You made the guy look like a paedophile'."*

Crying shame

YOU need to be a bruiser to keep Britain's prisons in order, but Sir David Ramsbotham would seem to be a steely figure even in his own private office. Since taking over two years ago Sir David has reduced both his senior personal secretaries to tears; both subsequently left.

Although Judith Purcell was highly acclaimed, Sir David had doubts. She was swiftly found another job within the Home Office. Miss Purcell's predecessor, Rosemary Prentice, took early retirement after also bursting into tears as a result of Sir David's brusque manner. He is said to have been angered to find his office had been locked by Ms Prentice, worried that his wallet might have been pinched. He insists he behaved reasonably. "It is crucial all staff play their full part." A likely replacement? A blind woman. "She will take no nonsense," says a Home Office source.

● *A NECKLACE worn by Diana, Princess of Wales, to watch the Royal Gala Performance of Swan Lake at the Royal Albert Hall last summer is being sold discreetly by Garrards, the Crown jewellers, for £250,000. Visitors to their London showroom are unaware that the glinting South Sea pearl and diamond necklace, with matching earrings, once adorned Diana's neck. "If someone is interested, we will tell them its history." The firm will give 20 per cent of proceeds to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund — it will keep the rest.*

THE TIMES DIARY

JASPER GERARD



Book binds

JUST as Richard Addis vacates the Editor's chair at *The Express*, word reaches a saddened Diary Towers about another embarrassment this week. On Monday, a writ landed on his desk from Michael O'Mara, the latest, and potentially most damaging, legal salvo in the long-running "Monk affair": the cloak-and-dagger operation which led to Anita Monk, wife of Ian Monk, then deputy editor, being arrested on suspicion of theft and receiving stolen goods after a photocopy of a book about Sarah, Duchess of York, was offered to *The Sun*. She was later cleared.

The "inside account", by Allan Starkie, was about to be serialised by *The Express*'s great rivals at the *Daily Mail*. Addis astutely distanced himself from the affair. But Monday's writ contained a sworn affidavit alleging that Addis had instructed his paper's newsdesk to acquire a copy of the book. "I think that Richard Addis was involved from the very beginning," says Michael O'Mara. "I am not sad about his departure." The paper denies any connection between the two events. Meanwhile, with typical sensitivity, Rosie Boycott, the incoming Editor, barrelled into her new office with her fly-on-the-wall film crew to record the serene smiles of staff, many now quite demented.



NOW for something completely different. Michael Palin, one of the godfather's of alternative comedy, has ensured his place in the Establishment. The erstwhile clown from Monty Python's *Flying Circus* is down for membership of the Travellers Club, the Pall Mall drop-in for Robin Cook, bottom-pinching barristers and gregarious foreign editors. Palin's invitation came after he gave a belting speech to the club about his experiences in exotic spots while filming TV masterpieces such as *Full Circle* and *Pole to Pole*. His audience broke into applause and insisted that his name be put forward for membership. The comedian's application should face little opposition; he will be seconded by Sir Peregrine Rhodes, the club's chairman and a former member of HM Diplomatic Service. But it will take some time before Palin is considered the Travellers' greatest observer on the peculiar activities of native sorts: a "special member" is Sir Wilfred Thesiger, the great explorer and writer, who was an attaché to the Duke of Gloucester's mission to Abyssinia for Haile Selassie's coronation in 1930. "So as you can see," says Rhodes, "He probably would not be the best travelled member."

هكذا من الأصل

REMEMBERING DIANA

It is time to wind up the fund and give directly to her charities

The death of Diana, Princess of Wales, led to a great outpouring, not just of grief and flowers, but of money too. The public mood was, and continues to be, one of generosity. People wanted to emulate after her death the compassion that the Princess showed during her life. As a result, a memorial fund was set up to honour her memory and disburse funds to good causes.

The intention, however, has been more successful than the execution. So far the fund has collected £41 million and expects another £100 million by the end of the year from sales of Elton John and Spice Girls CDs. Yet, eight months after the death, the fund has paid out less than £7 million — and it cannot even decide which landmines charity to support.

Now Earl Spencer has called for the fund to be wound up. It is hard not to feel sympathy for his cause. Far from honouring his sister's memory, the fund seems unable to avoid degrading it. Her signature has already graced tubs of margarine and lottery scratchcards have been sold in her name. Now trustees are considering other tacky suggestions, such as an England Rose lager, a brand of dog food and a Cindy doll in the Princess's likeness.

She would surely have been horrified by any such commercialisation of her memory, whether or not the funds eventually reached a charity. If she would not have contemplated marketing her signature or her face during her lifetime, why should these stunts be any less tasteless after her death?The Earl is right to resist the exploitation of his sister's image. The fund's trustees should simply say no to all attempts to do so. Their role is to be passive recipients of other people's generosity, not active fundraisers, trading on Diana's face and memory. If the upswell of compassion generated by the Princess's death continues to produce £1 million a week for good causes, that should be a great boon to the charitable world. But there is absolutely no need to sell to profit-making companies the right to attach her name, face or signature to their products.

It is not even as if the fund has proved efficient in handing out the money that it has received. Trustees could surely have decided in the first month that the six charities to which the Princess continued to be patron after she withdrew from public life could share, say, half of the money. The other half could have been distributed between the other good causes that she supported when she was more active. The fund seems to have no good excuse for sitting on the money for so long.

Britain's biggest charity is weakly led and dangerously unfocused. It has the potential to become an embarrassment to both the living and the dead. Earl Spencer is right. The memorial fund should wind itself up on the appropriate anniversary of Diana's death and ask the public to send money directly to the causes to which she devoted her life. Only then will her memory be truly honoured.

FEAR AND LOATHING

Paedophilia panic in Britain and Belgium

The citizens of Bristol and Brussels have shared the same anger for the past 48 hours. In both cases, the object has been a paedophile. In Bristol, a furious crowd assembled in response to a rumour that Sidney Cooke, the recently released child killer, had sought refuge in a police station. Although this location rendered reoffending implausible, outraged parents and others engaged in an ill-tempered protest that led to 12 arrests. In this instance, it seems possible that outsiders took over the demonstration with the deliberate intention of inciting trouble. Yet similar, if less violent, scenes have been witnessed right across the West Country — Bridgwater, Minehead, and Yeovil — whenever stories concerning Mr Cooke's whereabouts have surfaced.

In Brussels, matters have been far more dramatic. The farcical circumstances under which Marc Dutroux, who stands accused of an exceptionally gruesome set of child murders involving the incarceration and starvation of two eight-year-old girls, escaped from police custody for three hours have become a national scandal. Two Cabinet ministers have resigned in a vain attempt to placate public outrage. The Government of Jean-Luc Dehaene is in desperate trouble. If M Dutroux had been still at liberty this morning M Dehaene's tenure in power would be over. He still may feel obliged to leave office.

It is not surprising that Belgium has demanded a political sacrifice. The Dutroux affair does not have a remote parallel in British public life. The suspected killer was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment in 1992 for rape and child abuse. He was released for "good behaviour" three year later. That decision was made against the clear advice of public prosecutors. It has led to suggestions that M Dutroux enjoyed friends in high places who shared his own perverted tastes. This suspicion was reinforced by the spectacular fashion in which the Belgian authorities failed to arrest M Dutroux after another wave of atrocities against children was discovered. His trial, when it comes, may rock Brussels to its core.

The implication of political influence and police corruption, however, has only added an extra dimension to incidents that on their own would have repelled Belgium. To that extent, there is a connection to the revulsion that the Cooke release has caused here. At the heart of it all lies fear and loathing, not only of paedophiles but our incapacity to deal with paedophilia. It is a crime that cannot easily or comfortably be comprehended. In past decades, in as far as possible, all aspects of it were suppressed from public view. We are now rather more open about the problem. We are not much closer to a rational analysis of paedophilia itself or a consensus on the appropriate use of the law in response.

The instinctive reaction, whether in Britain or Belgium, is to treat paedophilia differently from all other offences. To some, this means a special category as a compulsion or mental illness that is essentially incurable. On that basis it is argued that those who have been convicted should be kept under institutional control. To others, it means that the normal process of the law should be suspended. The demand, partly echoed by Jack Straw two weeks ago, is for indeterminate custodial sentences controlled by psychiatrists or exceptional restrictions on liberty if a paedophile leaves prison.

The anger is understandable but the logic is still flawed. The precedents set would be exceptionally dangerous. The evidence available suggests that released paedophiles, as a group, have a relatively low rate of recidivism. Certain individuals are highly likely to repeat their crimes. No statistics will never satisfy the residents of a street where someone who has served a sentence for child sex offences sets up home. Statistics would have been little use in Bristol or Brussels yesterday. Yet a responsible society, with respect for the fundamental principles of law and fairness in practice, cannot allow fear to sweep facts away.

FIFA FOUL-UP

There is a fairer way to sell tickets than by the engaged tone

Bagging a ticket for the greatest show on earth will always be a lottery, whether the show is on Broadway or in a superbowl. The fiasco of the allocation of tickets for the World Cup shows, if nothing else, the offside laws of supply and demand. And it confirms that football is a rich game played by lions and cheetahs but managed by donkeys. The World Cup has more claim than most events to be the greatest show on earth. But its organisation is as chaotic as a car boot sale.

Since the hotlines in Paris opened to sell the remaining 110,000 tickets, about 35 million calls have been logged. But the organising committee (CFO) has engaged only 60 multilinguist operators to handle international bookings. It can take half an hour to buy 16 tickets, the maximum allowed. So fewer than half the tickets have been sold so far. British Telecom is limiting the number of calls that get through to France to prevent lines from crashing. The Dutch telephone system has crashed. The best place to book from is Switzerland, because it is not in the finals. A telecommunications statistician calculates the chance of booking a ticket by telephone from Britain as one in two million.

Such an overload stampede for tickets might be interpreted crudely as success. The CFO spokesman says: "We are looking for a quality service." For the first time there are 32 nations in the finals, so increasing the national demand for tickets by a third. French stadiums have comparatively small capacities, about half the size of the giant American bowls for the last World Cup. France is surrounded by football-crazy nations, most of them in the finals. And France is cheap and easy to get to, possibly easier than Chester by way of Crewe, certainly easier than Japan and Korea, where the next World Cup will be held.

The proportion of allocating 38 per cent of the tickets to French fans, 21 per cent to other nationalities, and the remainder to tour operators, sponsors and soccer's governing body FIFA is outrageous. The organising committee argues that French taxpayers are subsidising the competition and should therefore take the bulk of the seats. But this is the World Cup, not the French Cup. Simply to let prices rise to bring demand closer to supply would seem unfair to "ordinary" fans, who are already irritated to observe blocks of seats given to corporate sponsors, and often left as empty as hospitality seats for the tennis at Wimbledon.

One solution to the penalty earned by this World Cup is to decentralise. The Olympic Games have grown too big for a single city. The World Cup has become an event for a continent, especially a Continent as crowded and football-crazy as Europe. Say 2 per cent of the tickets should be allocated to each of the national soccer governing bodies in the finals. These could pass them down to the clubs. And the clubs could allocate the precious tickets by sweepstake or queue, as they are used to doing for national competitions. That would still be a lottery. But it would be fairer and less frustrating than the present lucky dip of dialling a permantly engaged telephone line.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Global strategy on plutonium needed

From Dr Jeremy Bray

Sir, Given the fuss there has been over the 9lb of weapons-grade uranium being brought to Dounreay (letters, April 23), the real scandal is that there has been no significant response by the Government or in Parliament to the Royal Society report *Management of Separated Plutonium*, published in February.

The report, produced by a working group under the chairmanship of Sir Ronald Mason, a former Chief Scientific Adviser at the Ministry of Defence, says:

The possibility that the stocks of plutonium might at some stage be accessed for illicit weapons production is of extreme concern.

The global stock of plutonium in 1995 was estimated at 1,239 tonnes, 140 of them reprocessed. The predicted UK stockpile of reprocessed civil plutonium in 2010 will account for about two thirds of the world's reprocessed plutonium inventory. In modern weapons technology, there is no necessary distinction between civil and military grades.

A reactor burns up about one tonne of fuel per year. A serious global strategy to dispose of the stock of plutonium will require 40 reactors, of which four could be in the UK, operating for 30 years. There is no possibility of this being implemented without a major commitment of adaptive national energy policies, pursuing a strategic goal. This is needed in any case to reduce global warming. This is not an issue between market, technology and defence policies, but a necessary combination of the three.

The issue has to be tackled at the highest levels of government, with the full participation of the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Can the UK give a lead, or will it leave it to France and Germany tactically to seek a share of the handling of former Soviet Union stocks? The UK should initiate the necessary urgent steps at the forthcoming G8 summit.

Yours sincerely,
JEREMY BRAY
(Opposition Spokesman on Science and Technology, 1983-92),
21 Horn Lane, Linton,
Cambridgeshire CB1 6HT.
April 23.

From Mr Lewis Stretch

Sir, While the indignation being expressed about the Georgian nuclear consignment is indeed ill-informed and misplaced (leading article, April 23), the Government should realise that its vulnerability to such reactions owes much to its and its predecessors' complacent lethargy in dealing with the problem of nuclear waste.

Writing in the December 1958 issue of *Nuclear Power*, I warned the Government that "inadequate attention is being paid to the potentially serious problem of the large fission product disposal facilities that will be needed if the vast increase of nuclear power generation being postulated throughout the world is to be implemented". And a couple of decades later, in the *Journal of the Institution of Nuclear Engineers* (September/October 1979), I wrote that "turning a small, densely populated island into a major reprocessing and dumping ground for nuclear waste is singularly ill-advised".

Now, forty years on, a House of Lords committee leisurely exploring options as part of the defence review does not do justice to the gravity of the problem.

Yours faithfully,
LEWIS STRETCH
(Works Manager, Calder Hall, 1954-57),
3 Laroc Close,
Godmanchester,
Cambridgeshire PE18 8AX.
April 23.

Film categories

From Mrs Avril Links

Sir, I have just walked out of the second film in two years, first *Pulp Fiction*, now *Good Will Hunting*. Despite receiving much critical acclaim from the media and from my teenage offspring, I considered both these films to be philistine and amoral.

The glorification of foul language and antisocial behaviour, suggesting it is acceptable provided it is explainable in terms of a history of deprivation and abuse, brutalises our youth and destroys their own critical faculties. I am not surprised that our valueless society tolerates physical and verbal violence, punishing it seldom and leniently.

Unless and until film distributors introduce a new film category, indicating suitability for the literate, discerning and moral, I shall stay at home.

Yours faithfully,
AVRIL LINKS
(Senior lecturer in law),
The Manchester Metropolitan University,
Elizabeth Gaskell Campus,
Hathersage Road,
Manchester M13 0JY.
April 20.

Weekend Money letters, page 61

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Weighing the odds for bookmakers

From the Chairman of the National Association of Bookmakers

Sir, As a third-generation racecourse bookmaker I feel that I must respond to the comments of Mr John Gosden, the racehorse trainer, on bookmakers' profits (report, "Plea for law reform to save British racing", April 20).

First, due to a run of poor results, very few racecourse firms (off-course firms are a different matter) are making "record profits" at present. Indeed, their gross profits, even in good times, amount to little more than about 3 per cent of turnover on average as the rest is returned to punters in the form of winnings.

Secondly, while it is quite possible to find trainers who have become millionaires out of racing it is almost unheard of to find a racecourse bookmaker who has made a million out of his on-course betting business.

Colleagues in the off-course business also tell me that their profits are not nearly as good as might first appear, as the rate of return on their investment in betting shops must reflect rates which can be obtained from the leisure market as a whole. The current return from operating betting shops compares unfavourably with, for example, running hotels, as Ladbrokes does.

The racing industry is heavily subsidised by the Horserace Betting Levy Board, which in effect raises a private tax on betting turnover. Parliament legislated on this in order to provide funding for the development of public facilities on the racecourse and for the provision of prize money for winning owners — an entirely fair and proper way to support racing.

If Mr Gosden or any of his rich owners are dissatisfied they should direct their comments to the HBLB rather than the Government.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID BODEN,
Chairman,
The National Association of Bookmakers Ltd,
298 Ewell Road,
Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7AQ.
April 22.

Youth and music

From Mr Larry Westland

Sir, I was pleased to read (letter, April 21) that Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, is working to rejuvenate musical instrument teaching in schools. The great fabric of instrumental teaching, begun by a Labour government after the war, was effectively torn down by the Conservatives in the mid to late-Eighties.

The recent laudable decision of the Department for Education and Employment to improve literacy and numeracy has sadly had a negative effect on our work at Music for Youth. The directive sent a clear signal to commerce and industry that music in education is of secondary importance. This comes at a time when commercial decisions on sponsorship are increasingly dictated by marketing priorities rather than social responsibility.

Our work involves around 50,000 young musicians and singers, mostly from the maintained sector. We are finding it almost impossible to raise money from our traditional funding base. Fortunately, this year, we have been rescued by financial backing from the National Union of Teachers, Unison, and *The Times Educational Supplement*.

I hope that Mr Smith's plans to rejuvenate instrumental teaching will send out a more positive message.

With kind regards,
LARRY WESTLAND
(Founder and Executive Director),
Music for Youth,
102 Point Pleasant, SW18 1PP.

Research and animals

From Miss Janis Hardiman

Sir, Since Linda McCartney was such a staunch and lifelong supporter of the rights and welfare of animals, I was somewhat dismayed that, following her death (report, April 20, later editions; letters, April 23), a family spokesman, when suggesting donations to charities in her memory, simply referred to cancer research and animal welfare charities.

It is perhaps regrettable that a clearer distinction was not made between those organisations such as the Lord Dowding Fund for Humane Research, which includes work on breast cancer and makes no use of animals, and other cancer charities which regularly use animals in experimentation.

Surely it would not have been her wish that, inadvertently, her own tragic death should promote yet more suffering for the animals for which she fought so tirelessly in her life.

Yours faithfully,
JANIS HARDIMAN,
Heathland Studio, Vale of Health,
Hampstead, NW3 1AZ.
April 23.

A reassurance

From Mr A. E. Laycock

Sir, Now that Fiona Jones, MP for Newark, has been charged with electoral fraud (report and photograph, April 24) it is reassuring to note that Labour officials have emphasised that the allegations were not "particularly serious".

That's all right, then.

Yours faithfully,
A. E. LAYCOCK,
77 South Audley Street, W1Y 5TA.
April 24.

Chancing their luck?

From the Master of the Worshipful Company of Actuaries

Sir, Mr Peter Tandy (letter, April 23) spotted the supposed close relationship between the Actuaries and the Makers of Playing Cards.

He could perhaps also have noted from the Court and Social page announcement (April 21) the presence at the same dinner of the Company of Glass Sellers, from whom one might just be able to buy a crystal ball.

Yours,
RICHARD HAWKES,
Master, The Worshipful Company of Actuaries,
Twyford House, Twyford,
Winchester, Hampshire SO21 1NJ.
April 23.

Restoration of art

From Mr C. Velson Horie

Sir, In insisting that restorers should be made responsible for their mistakes (report, April 16), ArtWatch is reflecting the increasing maturity of the nascent conservation/restoration profession. Medical and legal professions have had legal definition, with correspondingly high status, for centuries.

The United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, in association with other groups, is currently implementing a scheme to set professional standards and assess the practitioners, not only for conservators of fine art, but antiquities and zoological conservators. So Mr Michael Daley, Director of ArtWatch UK, will soon have the tools to inform unbiased criticism or praise for those caring for works of art.

We welcome the support of ArtWatch in pushing for increased standards and transparency. But standards will rise only if conservators have proper training and appropriate rewards.

For this, too, UKIC would welcome the organisation's support.

Yours etc,
VELSON HORIE
(Chair, Accreditation Working Group),
United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works,
109 The Chandlery,
50 Westminster Bridge Road,
London, SE1 7QY.
April 17.

Nurses' pay

From Mr David Dixon

Sir, I am a nurse of 23 years' experience and would dearly love to resume my work in the land of my birth.

Each year I eagerly await news that our Government recognises the worth of the dedicated, overworked and underpaid nurses of the failing NHS (report, April 21). Alas, each year I resign myself to working for yet another year in a country that properly rewards its professionals.

I came to the United States 11 years ago with the intention of staying a short time. However, because this country values and rewards my profession more highly, I expect I will have to continue to forsake my beloved England.

Clothing, feeding, housing and educating my family take a higher precedence.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID DIXON,
1818 Vassar Avenue, #114,
Glendale, Ca 91204.
dpdixon@iname.com
April 21.

Oxford Union's role

From Mr Michael Beloff, QC, President of Trinity College, Oxford

Sir, May I make three comments on your proposition that the days of the Oxford Union as a school for statesmen may be over (leading article, April 18).

First, new Labour's landslide may have buried for a while the parliamentary ambitions of the products of the last decade, many of whom were Thatcher's children, just as those of this will be Blair's babes. (Incidentally, the outgoing Cabinet had five ex-presidents in it.)

Secondly, ever since I successfully moved the admission of women to membership of the Union in 1963, there has been an ever-increasing number of female officers. Westminster politics has been slower to reflect that desirable equality.

Thirdly, modern Oxford graduates sensibly look to a professional career before politics rather than simply a professional career in politics — to the benefit both of themselves and, in the long term, of our political culture.

The demise of the Union, like that of other Oxford institutions, has been greatly exaggerated; the age of reasoned debate will come again.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL J. BELOFF
(President, Oxford Union Society, 1962, and Senior Trustee),
Trinity College, Oxford OX1 3BH.

Whodunnit — and where are they?

From Mr R. M. Jenkins

Sir, Surely when the list was compiled for your 100 Masters of Crime supplement (April 18), the criterion should have been decades of meritorious publication. The promise shown by writers early in their career is an insufficient qualification.

If Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers are listed, why not Nicholas Blake, John Dickson Carr/Carter Dickson, Margaret Millar, Ross Macdonald and Ellery Queen, to name but a few. And Margery Allingham, Michael Gilbert and Ngaio Marsh definitely deserve more than a passing mention in the supplement's articles.

It seems that the title of "Master" has been awarded too hurriedly to some of the authors on your list.

Yours sincerely,
R. M. JENKINS,
8 Russell Road,
Havant, Hampshire PO9 2DG.
April 21.

From Mr F. A. J. Dent

Sir, In your top 100 crime writers, how could you possibly have omitted Michael Innes? *The Journeying Boy*, *Lament for a Maker* and *Hamlet Revenge* are classics.

Yours sincerely,
ALAN DENT,
19 Truemans Heath Lane,
Hollywood, Worcestershire B47 5QE.
April 18.

From Mr David J. Flower

Sir, Your list does not include G. K. Chesterton, Edmund Crispin or Georges Simenon. No list of great crime writers is complete without them.

Yours sincerely,
D. J. FLOWER,
32 Byfield Road, Chipping Warden,
Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 1LD.
davjflower@aol.com
April 21.

From Mr Timothy Manwell

Sir, I realize that the minute you limit something to the "top 100" there are bound to be those who are left out. Even so, I was quite shocked to see that Rex Stout is absent. He should surely have "made the cut".

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY MANWELL,
4176 Maple Street,
Cass City, Michigan 48726.
tmanwell@srs.usa.com
April 23.

Paper clips

From Mr John Perrett

Sir, For most of our married life my late wife suffered from Severe Newspaper Article Clipping Syndrome (Snacs). The recipient was usually our daughter, a research scientist, who regularly received sundry biological snippets about three months after reading the original research articles in the scientific press. It appears that in the advanced stages of Snacs, the greater the esoteric knowledge of the recipient, the greater the volume of clippings.

I must remember to send Miss Marjorie Dawson's letter (April 17; other letters, April 21) to my daughter.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN PERRETT,
35 Bay Crescent,
Swanage, Dorset BH19 1RB.
April 23.

From Mrs I. Houfe Chadwick

Sir, I believe the habit is in the genes and would call like-minded afflicted folk "infomaniacs". I may be tempted to clip out the replies.

Yours faithfully,
ISABELLE HOUFE CHADWICK,
54 Grove Park Road,
Chiswick, W4 3SD.

From Mrs Malcolm Hord

Sir, The words "hack" and "snicker" spring to mind, but I believe my sons, who have been bombarded by my clippings since they could read, would say "Mother".

Yours faithfully,
ELIZABETH HORD,
24 Brunswick Gardens, W8 4AL.
April 23.

From Mrs Bridget Collier

Sir, I was able to read only the first two paper-clips letters properly today as I had already cut out the Births column on the reverse of the Letters page.

Yours sincerely,
BRIDGET COLLIER,
10 Lambourne Avenue, SW19 7DW.
April 21.

From Mr Andrew Graham

Sir, I clip newspapers but I tend to call myself a *Times* competition entrant.

Yours, without much luck so far,
ANDREW GRAHAM,
Northward, Portinscale,
Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5RW.

From Mr Martin West

Sir, An extractor fan?

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN WEST,
Clover Hill House,
The Square, Westbury-sub-Mendip,
Somerset BA5 1HJ.
April 21.

COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 24: The Duke of Edinburgh, President, today attended the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth's Eighteenth Biennial Conference followed by Dinner at the Beaufort Hotel, Darwin, Australia.

His Royal Highness, Patron, the British Driving Society, was represented by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Miller at the Funeral of Mr David Clarke which was held in the Church of St John the Baptist, Pilton, near Shepton Mallet, Somerset, this morning.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, Outward Bound Trust, was represented by Mr Henry Elwes (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire) at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Mr Oscar Guggenheim which was held in Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire, today.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 24: The Prince of Wales, Patron, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, this evening attended a Seventieth Birthday Concert at St David's Hall, Cardiff, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of South Glamorgan (Captain Norman Lloyd-Edwards RNR).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 24: The Duke of York, Patron, this evening attended a Reception given by the Jubilee Sailing Trust at Chatsworth House and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire (Mr John Bather).

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 24: The Duke of Kent, Vice Chairman, the British Overseas Trade Board, this evening attended a Banquet, marking the Centenary of the founding of Robert Bosch Limited in the United Kingdom, at Guildhall, London EC2.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
April 24: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this evening attended a Reception given by the Tower Hamlets Old People's Welfare Trust at the Law Society, Chancery Lane, London WC2.

Royal engagements at the weekend

TODAY:
The Queen will attend a reception at Sandringham House to mark the centenary of the Royal Norfolk Regiment Veterans' Association, at 6.30.

TOMORROW:
Prince Edward, as patron, National Youth Theatre of Great Britain, will attend a ball at Grosvenor House, at 7.10.

Lecture

The Royal Fine Art Commission
Lord St John of Fawsley, Chairman of the Royal Fine Art Commission, presided at the Commission's Annual Lecture at 7 St James's Square, London SW1, which was delivered on Thursday, April 23, by Sir Colin Stansfield Smith, CBE, on 'Dodos, Dinosaurs or Doves? Architecture: Past, Present and Future'. The lecture was followed by a reception.

Election

Royal Institute of Oil Painters
Mr Richard Manwaring Baines, MA, has been elected President of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters. He becomes the 12th President since the Institute was founded in 1882.

Dinners

Blacksmiths' Company
The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, accompanied by the Sheriffs and their ladies, were present at the annual dinner of the Blacksmiths' Company held last night at the Mansion House. Mr Tim Herring, Prime Warden, was in the chair. Baroness Flather was the guest speaker. Mr Hugh Adams, Fourth Warden, also spoke.

Dean Close School
The Bollinger Club held its Trinity Term Dinner on Wednesday, April 22, at which Canon Neil Heavisides, Precentor of Gloucester Cathedral, was the guest of honour. Also present were Mr C.M. Kenyon, President, Mr L.S. Allington, Senior Member, Elizabeth Doxat, Chairman, the Headmaster and Mrs Bacon.

Lord Moore of Wolvercote
Lord Moore of Wolvercote, Old Cheltonian, was the host at a dinner of the Old Cheltonian London committee held last night at the House of Lords. Mr Anthony C. Marangos was in the chair. The Headmaster of Cheltenham College was the guest speaker.

London Pembrokeshire Society
Brigadier Rolph James, President of the London Pembrokeshire Society, presided at the 100th annual dinner last night at Innholders' Hall. Mr Philip Madoc, Mr Wyn Calvin and Miss Eleanor Davies, committee chairman, also spoke.

Service dinners

RCT
Major-General Martin White presided at the annual dinner of the Institution of the RASC and RCT held last night at the RLC Headquarters, Deepcut. Colonel N.E.L. Gilbert, Regimental Colonel, RLC, and the Clerk of the Carmen's Company were the guests.

London and Kent Artillery
The London and Kent Artillery held a ladies guest night dinner last night at the Royal Artillery Mess, Woolwich. Colonel D.J. McLelland presided. Mr Roger Westbrook and Major-General D.L. Burden also spoke.

RAF Dinner Club
Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns, Chief of the Air Staff, was the guest of honour at the annual dinner of the RAF Dinner Club held last night at the club. Air Commodore A.J. Burton presided. Air Chief Marshal Sir Thomas Kennedy was among those present.

Royal Air Force Supply Officers
Air Commodore N.M Griffiths presided at the annual RAF Supply Officers' dinner club dinner held last night at RAF Wyton. Group Captain N.S. Morris was in the chair.

Reception

Skal Clubs of the United Kingdom
The Lord Mayor of York was the host at a civic reception held last night in York Guildhall for senior members of the UK Travel & Tourism industry attending the 45th national assembly of the Skal Clubs of the United Kingdom. Mr Michael Bullough, national president, and Mr Clive Davis, international president from Norway, presided at a dinner held afterwards at the Royal York Hotel.

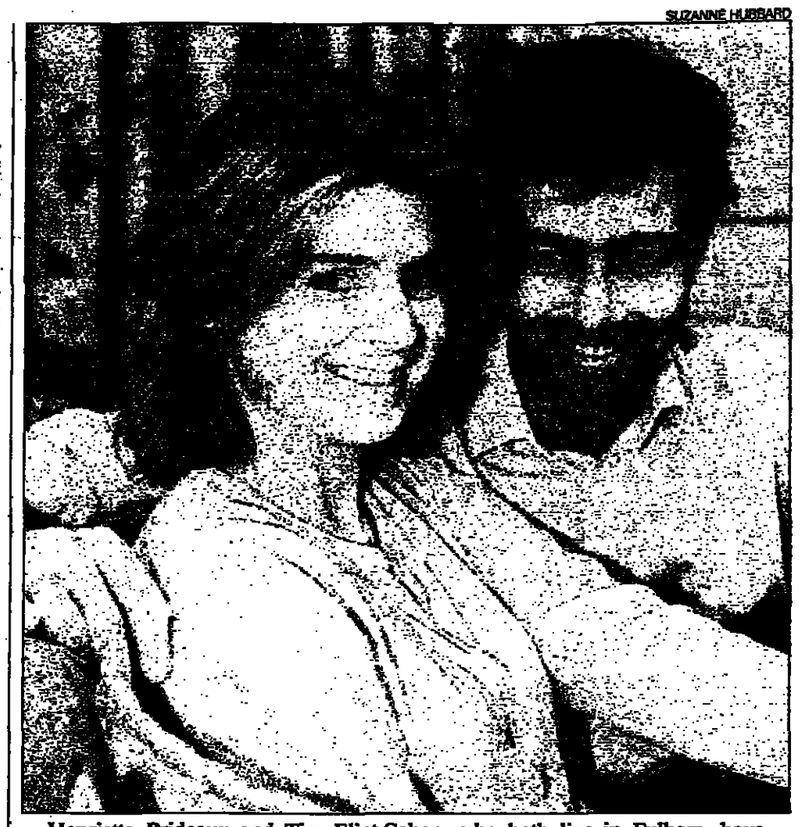
Elections

Merchant Adventurers of the City of York
The following have been elected officers of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of the City of York for the ensuing year:
Governor, Mr Ashley Burgess; Deputy Governor, Mr Lindsay Mackinlay; Senior Warden, District Judge Michael Grills; Junior Warden, Mr Trevor Copley.

Legal appointment

Mr Michael Christopher Campbell Hart, QC, has been appointed a Justice of the High Court assigned to the Chancery Division.

SUZANNE HUBBARD



Henrietta Prideaux and Tim Eliot-Cohen, who both live in Fulham, have recently announced their engagement

Birthdays

TODAY: Professor R.F. Boucher, Principal and Vice Chancellor, UMIST, 58; Mr Eric Bristow, darts player, 41; Mr Anthony Christopher, trade unionist, 73; Mr David de Peyer, former director-general, Cancer Research Campaign, 64; Mr Ellis Douek, otologist, 64; Sir Geoffrey Ellerton, former chairman, Local Government Boundary Commission for England, 78; Dr T.E. Faber, chairman, Geoffrey Faber Holdings, 71; Dr John Fox, medical statistician, 52; Lord Hayter, 87; Sir Paul Judge, former director-general, Conservative Party, 49; Mrs Janet King, former Governor, Holloway prison, 48; the Earl of Lichfield, 59; Mr John V. Light, Rector, Edinburgh Academy, 50; Mr David Machin, Under Treasurer, Gray's Inn, 64; Lady Marre, former chairman, BBC and IBA Central Appeals Advisory Committee, 78; Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Godfrey Milton-Thompson, 68; Judge Marian Norrie, 58; Mr Al Pacino, actor, 58; Judge Helen Paling, 65; Mr David Shepherd, artist, 67; Lord Skidelsky, FBA, 59; Sir Francis Graham-Smith, FRS, former Astronomer Royal, 75; Mrs Linda Stone, former president, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 47; Mr Peter Sutherland, managing director, Goldman Sachs International, 52; Mrs V.E. Sutherland, diplomat, 59.

TOMORROW: The Marquess of Bute, 40; Mr Justice Cazalet, 62; Mr David Coleman, sports commentator, 72; Sir Gordon Downey, former Comptroller and Auditor General, 70; Mr J.C.B. Gosling, former Principal, St Edmund Hall, Oxford, 68; Professor Margaret Gowing, FRS, FBA, scientific historian, 77; Mr Stuart Higgins, Editor, *The Sun*, 42; Professor Sir James Holt, FBA, former Master, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, 76; Mr M.L.R. Isaac, former Headmaster, Latymer Upper School, Hammersmith, 70; Mr Justice Jacob, 57; Mr William Tudor John, senior partner, Allen and Overy, 54; Major-General Harry Knutton, former director-general, City and Guilds of London Institute, 77; Dr Dame Anne McLaren, FRS, zoologist, 71; Professor Wilfrid Mellers, composer, 84; Sir Oliver Millar, Surveyor Emeritus of the Queen's Pictures, 75; Professor J.E. Morpurgo, Professor of American literature, 80; Professor Philip Poole-Wilson, cardiologist, 55; Mr Peter Schaufuss, ballet dancer and choreographer, 49; Dame Margaret Scott, founding director, Australian Ballet School, 76; Mr Derek Waring, actor, 68; Mr Morris West, novelist, 82; Mr Willie Wood, bowler, 60.

Forthcoming marriages

Dr D.G.E. Caldicott and Miss V.M. Mills
The engagement is announced between David, elder son of Professor and Mrs C.E.J. Caldicott, of Dublin, and Victoria, daughter of Dr and Mrs K.L.M. Mills, of White Waltham, Berkshire.

Mr H.M. Crabtree and Miss M.E. Landin
The engagement is announced between Harvey, son of Mr Michael Crabtree and Mrs June Crabtree, of Norwich, Norfolk, and Shelley, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Landin, of Stowmarket, Suffolk.

Mr P.S. Davey and Miss L.M. Grayburn
The engagement is announced between Paul, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J.G.N. Davey, of Stockton Heath, Cheshire, and Lara, daughter of Mr and Mrs J.R. Grayburn, of Rhu, Argyll and Bute.

Mr M.D. Flann and Miss S. Tun
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr Peter Flann and Mrs Janet Flann, of Romsey, Hampshire, and Sandy, daughter of Dr K. Tun and Dr M.M. Soe, of London.

Mr T.O. Heffer and Miss V.P. Hancock
The engagement is announced between Timothy, eldest son of Mr and Mrs William Heffer, of Cambridge, and Victoria, daughter of Mr and Mrs March Hancock, of Barnes, London.

Mr D.T. Korn and Miss J.L. Kelley
The engagement is announced between Daniel, younger son of Mr and Mrs Alan Korn, of Colney, Norwich, and Joanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Kelley, of Ashtead, Surrey.

Mr J.G. Moss and Miss C.M. Redwood
The engagement is announced between Graham, only son of Mr and Mrs Tony Moss, of Marthall, Cheshire, and Catherine, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Redwood, of High Ercall, Shropshire.

Mr J.W. Robinson and Miss S.S. Kydd
The engagement is announced between Joseph, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Joseph Robinson, and Susie, only daughter of Annabel Clayton Kydd.

Mr P.F. de Waal and Miss J.M. Slater
The engagement is announced between Philip, son of Mr and Mrs Attie de Waal, of Oudtshoorn, Little Karoo, South Africa, and Judith, daughter of Mr and Mrs George Slater, of Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent.

Mr N. White and Miss C.J. Plumb
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Dr and Mrs Patrick White, of Darley Abbey, Derbyshire, and Claire, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Joseph Plumb, of Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.

Anniversaries

TODAY:
BIRTHS: King Edward II, reigned 1307-27, Caernarvon, 1284; Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector 1653-58, Huntingdon, 1599; Sir Marc Isambard Brunel, engineer, Hacqueville, France, 1769; John Keble, a founder of the Oxford Movement, Fairford, Gloucestershire, 1792; C.B. Fry, sportsman, Croydon, 1872; Walter de la Mare, poet and novelist, Charlton, Kent, 1873; Guglielmo Marconi, physicist, Nobel laureate 1909, Bologna, 1874.

DEATHS: Torquato Tasso, poet, Rome, 1595; Anders Celsius, inventor of the Centigrade thermom William Cowper, poet, East Dereham, Norfolk, 1800; Sir Carol Reed, film director, London, 1976.

TOMORROW:
BIRTHS: Leonardo da Vinci, painter, sculptor, architect and engineer, Vinci, 1452; Alfred Krupp, industrialist, Essen, 1812; Artemus Ward (pen name of Charles Farrar Browne), writer, Waterford, Maine, 1834; Rudolf Hess, Nazi war criminal, Alexandria, Egypt, 1894; John Grierson, documentary film producer, Perth, 1898.

DEATHS: Jeremy Collier, controversialist, London, 1726; Sidney James, actor, Sunderland, 1976; Dame Cicely Courtneidge, actress, London, 1980; William (Count) Basie, jazz bandleader and pianist, Florida, 1984.

John Wilkes Booth, actor, assassin of President Lincoln (April 14), was shot dead by troops, 1865.

School news

Castle Court School, Wimborne
Castle Court, now with over 300 pupils, will be celebrating its 50th anniversary with a Golden Jubilee year beginning in September 1998. Old Castellans who would like further information about the celebrations including a Reunion Dinner should contact Mrs Mary Donald Scott (President, Castellans), c/o Castle Court School, Knoll Lane, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, BH21 3RF. (Tel: 01202 694438)
(e-mail: jubilee@castlecourt.com).

Giggleswick School
Summer Term began last Monday and will end on Saturday, July 11. The Sir Douglas Glover Memorial Lecture will be given by the Right Hon Christopher Patten on May 5 and Speech Day is on Saturday, May 23, when Dr Alastair Cooke, OBE, General Secretary of the Independent Schools Council, will be the Guest of Honour. The CCF will be inspected by Air Commodore J.A.F. Ford, RAF, on Friday, May 15. The Foundation Stone of the new Dining Hall will be laid by Mr Graham Watson, MBE, MA, JP, also on May 15. Old Giggleswickian Day is on Saturday, July 4, and there will be a special Reunion for those who left 1986-95 on Saturday, May 2. The Old Giggleswickian North East Dinner will take place in Darlington on Saturday, June 27. Giggleswick will host the Northern Prep Schools Music Day on Thursday, May 7, and Catterall Hall, Giggleswick's Prep School, will have an Open Day on Saturday, May 16. Further information on these events is available from the Headmaster's Secretary on Tel: 01729 823545, Fax 01729 824187, e-mail: headmaster@giggleswick.n-yorks.sch.uk

Mill Hill School
Summer term began on Monday, April 20. The Captain of Cricket is Simon Bunyard and Captain of Tennis is Samantha Paget. For all prospective pupils and their parents Open Morning will be at 11am on Saturday, May 9. The Dinner to mark the 30th anniversary of the exchange with the Institution Join-Lambert, Rouen, will take place on Friday, May 15. The Chapel Centenary Service will be held on OMs Day, Sunday, June 21, when the preacher will be the Bishop of Chelmsford. OMs who have not yet applied for tickets can do so by contacting the Headmaster's Secretary, Mrs Diane Mills. Term ends on July 2. During the summer holiday, the 1st XI will tour Barbados, members of the Community Service group will work in two schools in Ethiopia and the Mill Hill Theatre Company will perform *Salome* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

SIR CAROL REED
DIRECTOR OF ODD MAN OUT

Sir Carol Reed, the film director who made *Odd Man Out*, *The Third Man*, *The Way Ahead* and *The True Glory*, and who was knighted in 1952, has died at the age of 69.

During the period of Hollywood's domination of the film industry in the 1930s and 1940s, Carol Reed was one of the few English directors who could be reckoned the equal of the best that Hollywood could produce. One of his earliest films, *A Girl Must Live*, was one of the best British comedies to be made before the Second World War, but he soon forsook comedy to concentrate on drama. He has been described as a director of loneliness and betrayal; an artist fascinated by the sombre contemplation of the outcast from society, but his range was yet remarkably wide, and he had a warm and sympathetic understanding of human nature, as he demonstrated in *The Way Ahead*, a study of the way in which a group of civilians could be moulded into a disciplined and efficient fighting force. This had a splendid cast including David Niven, Leo Genn, Renee Asherson, Jimmy Hanley, Hugh Burden and Stanley Holloway. But *Odd Man Out* must stand as his masterpiece, the story of the last eight hours in the life of a dying gunman, magnificently played by James Mason. His later films never again reached such a standard.

Carol Reed was born in London on December 30, 1906 and was educated at King's School, Canterbury. His leanings were towards the stage, and he made his first appearance in a small part at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, in 1924. Later he became a stage director for Edgar Wallace ... When Wallace died, Reed went to Ealing Studios and became a dialogue director and assistant director under Basil Dean. In 1934 he directed his first picture, *Midshipman Easy*, and followed it with a splendid interpretation of Priestley's play, *Laburnum Grove*. A thriller, *Talk of the Devil*, with a most ingenious use of sound, was his next production, and then he fully established himself with *Bank Holiday* (starring Margaret Lockwood), a picture which really captured the spirit of the bank holiday mood in England.

In 1939 he made *A Girl Must Live*, the best and most original comedy to come out of a British studio for several years, but this was really his last essay in lightweight material. *The Stars Look Down* (with Michael Redgrave and Margaret Lockwood), *Night Train to Munich*, *Kipps*, *The Young Mr Pitt*, *The Way Ahead* and the semi-documentary *The True Glory* (in partnership with the American director, Garson Kanin) were all made during the war years between 1940 and 1945. *Odd Man Out* followed in 1947, and *The Third Man* in 1949 — played against the background of a corrupt and war-torn Vienna, and with its haunting zither accompaniment on the sound track. His films of the 1950s and 1960s failed to recapture this outstanding quality of dramatic fatalism. *Outcast of the Islands*, *Trapeze*, *The Key*, *Our Man in Havana* (with Sir Alec Guinness) and *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, with Charlton Heston in the part of Michelangelo, were each made with all the old professionalism and observation, but the spark of inspiration was missing.

His first musical, *Oliver* (1968), though a box office success, was generally thought to do less than justice to Lionel Bart's original conception; *The Lost Warrior* (1970), starring Anthony Quinn as a Red Indian, was not a film of striking merit; and *Kidnapped* (1972) a Stevensonian exercise with Michael Caine as Alan Breck, while a straightforward piece of story-telling never managed anything beyond a view of decent respectability.

Reed was twice married, first in 1943 to Diana Wynyard and, in 1947, to another actress, Penelope Dudley Ward. Of his second marriage there was a son.

ON THIS DAY
April 25, 1976

The obituary writer felt that Carol Reed's finest film was Odd Man Out *and that his later works did not live up to its inspiration. History may well judge him more generously*

RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE



A poster for *The Third Man*, today perhaps the best remembered of Carol Reed's many films

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

BIRTHS

ACKROYD - On April 17th 1998 to Zoe (née Gorham) and Christopher, a son, William Stuart, a dear brother for Hannah.

BARRETT - On April 14th, to Jane (née Legge) and Rupert, a daughter, Lottie Hannah.

BAXTER - On April 20th 1998 to Alison (née Green) and Jonathan, a son, Joshua Edward Lund, a brother for Emily.

BROWN - On April 22nd at The Portland Hospital, to Monica and Anthony, a beautiful son, Sebastian Edoardo.

ECKLIN - On Saturday 18th April 1998, to Victoria (Gath) and Mark, a daughter, Francesca Grace Gath, a sister for Alexander, Charlie and Patrick.

FOOKS - On April 23rd 1998, to Rachel and Matthew, a daughter, Martha Esme.

HARDY - On April 21st at The Portland Hospital, to Renee and Nathaniel, a son, Naseem, a brother to Natalya, Nathaniel III and Nita.

HARPER-GARDNER - On April 17th in Worcester, to Alison and Patrick, a son, Henry Patrick.

ILSLEY - On April 21st, to Steph and John, a daughter, Florence Ivy Rose, a sister for James, Jessica and Harry.

KENDALL - See Nash.

LATHAM - See Ilsley.

LYLE - On St George's Day at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, to Victoria (née Elwyn) and Kevin, a son, Freddie George Anthony.

NASH - On 30th March 1998 to Catharine (née Kendall) and Simon, a son, Robert Edward 7lbs 14ozs.

PECK - On April 23rd 1998, to Lucy (née Selby) and Oliver, a son, Harry, a brother for Minnie and Kate.

PENNANT - On April 21st 1998, to Don and Allie, a son, Jack Arthur Aubrey, a brother for Jessica.

PERRET - On April 18th at The Portland Hospital, to Anne and Jean-Pierre, a son, Hadrien, a brother for Alexandre.

SAMKEY - on March 25th 1998 to Deborah (née Rhodes) and Paul a daughter, Honor Catherine.

SULLIVAN - On April 15th, 1998, in Bury St. Edmunds, to Maryanne and Sean, a beautiful daughter, Hannah, a little sister for Ella.

TARAMASCO - On 18th April, to Victoria and Gus, a son, Alexander Joseph.

TAYLOR-YOUNG - On St George's Day, 23rd April, to Sophie (née Bennett) and Nicholas, a bouny baby, Constance Rosa Daisy-Bell. Many thanks to all at King's College.

WEITZMANN - On April 18th at The Portland Hospital, to Susan and Adam, a daughter, Sarah Kate, a sister for Jonathan and Deborah.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

CURRIE - James to Pamela in London April 26th 1958.

DEATHS

ASKEW - On 22nd April at Hillingdon Hospital Charles Kenneth, aged 76 years. Beloved husband of Irene and devoted father of John, Christopher, James and grandfather. Funeral at Breakspear Crematorium on 1st May at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Enquiries to H.C. Grimestead tel: (01895) 421000.

DEATHS

BEDFORD - Thomas Edwin FICE on April 23rd 1998 peacefully of Heaton Moor, Stockport, aged 77 years. Beloved husband of Ruth and very dear to all his family. Service at the Parish Church of St Paul, Heaton Moor on Thursday April 30th at 11 am, prior to committal at Stockport Crematorium at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations if wished to The Stroke Association c/o and enquiries to George Ball & Son, 39 Derby Range, Stockport SK4 4AB, tel: (0161) 432-2131.

BROOKS - On 17th April 1998 peacefully at Beacon House Residential Home, Fleet, Hampshire, at the age of 104. Agnes Gilmore beloved wife of the late Leslie Clifford Brooks. Funeral Service on Tuesday 28th April at Holy Trinity Church, Church Crookham at 2.30pm, followed by burial in Fleet Cemetery. Any enquiries Tel A & W Goddard 01252-616431.

CURREY - Kenneth John on April 17th aged 69, very much loved husband of Beryl and father of Sarah and Fiona, who will be greatly missed. Funeral Service April 27th at 3 pm Christ Church, Chatterhouse Road, Orpington. Family flowers only. Donations c/o Chappells, Orpington, to Marie Curie Cancer Care or South Bromley Hospice Care.

ECCLES - Robert (Bertie) died suddenly on Sunday 19th April 1998. Private Cremation. Memorial Service at St Mary's Church Henley-on-Thames at 12 noon on Wednesday April 29th. Donations, if wished, to St Mary's Church for local charities.

FOOKS - On April 22nd 1998, peacefully at St Mary's, Burgess Hill, Sx, The Reverend Edward Graham (Gim), aged 84 years. Fortified in the rights of the Church. A well loved Parish priest in Sussex parishes. Requiem Mass at St Georges Retreat, Burgess Hill, on Thursday April 30th at 11.30 am, followed by interment. No flowers, but donations to the charity of your choice c/o R.A. Brooks & Son, 35, Wivelsfield Road, Haywards Heath, W. Sussex, tel: (01444) 454391.

GOMPERTZ - Kathleen née Xast, died 21st April 1998 greatly loved and hugely missed by all those privileged to know her including her 3 daughters, Anne, Janet, Linda, 5 grandchildren, sister Eileen and many other relatives and friends. Donations please to Orbis reg. charc. no. 1061352.

JOHNSTONE - Nancy Hayes passed away Saturday 18th April. Dearly loved wife of James Veitch Johnstone. Will be sadly missed by family and friends. Funeral Service at Bangor Crematorium on Saturday 25th April at 11am. No flowers by request but donations if desired to St David's Hospice Appeal c/o H.O. Davies Ltd., 29 High Street, Bangor, Gwynedd.

JOHNSON - Lt. Col. Peter John Dudley, OBE, on 23rd April 1998, in his 84th year. Suddenly and peacefully at West Middlesex Hospital. Sadly missed by family and friends. Private cremation. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to the Alzheimer's Society, Enquiries 0171 376 4091.

MACAULSLAND - Primrose, peacefully March 29th 1998, loved by so many. Donations if liked to RSPB.

MARSH - Jack Edmund Bruce, Priest, on 23rd April peacefully at home in his ninetieth year. Beloved husband and father, friend and schoolmaster. Funeral at St Nicholas Church, Biddestone, Chippenham, Wilts, at 11 am on Saturday 2nd May. Memorial Service to be announced later.

MOLESWORTH-St. AUBYN - On 22nd April 1998. Suddenly, at home, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Anscott Molesworth-St Aubyn Bt MSE DL, aged 71 years, husband of Iona. Funeral private. No flowers, donations if desired in his memory to the Cornwall Scout Association c/o R.J. Bray (Funeral Director), Bridge End, Wadebridge, Cornwall. A Service of Thanksgiving to held at Egloshayle Parish Church, Weybridge, on Friday 15th May at 3.00 pm.

POWELL - Robert William, dearly loved husband of Christine, father of Simon and grandfather, on 23rd April aged 88. Headmaster of Sherborne School 1950-1970. Funeral Service at St Nicholas' Church, Child Okeford on Thursday 30th April at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to King Edward VI Trust, Sherborne School.

REESE-OWEN - Sheila Beatrice Mary (née Hultgren), peacefully on 22nd April at Katharine House Hospice Adderbury, aged 78. Much loved mother of Susan, David, Max, Kristina and Justin and grandmother. Private cremation; family flowers only. Thanksgiving Service 4 pm Tuesday, 28th April at Duddington Church.

SHEPPARD - Jillian Jane (Jillie) died on 20th April 1998 aged 52. Originally from Tasmania, she lived in England for many years, most recently in Rudgwick, West Sussex. Cremation at Guildford Crematorium on Monday 27th April 1998 at 11 am. Donations in her memory to the cancer charity of your choice, or flowers to Aylings Funeral Directors, South Road, Guildford, by 9 am on Monday.

SOLBY - Dorothy Mary (Dorwen). Passed away peacefully on 18th April. Beloved mother of David and Carolyn and equally beloved grandmother of Claudia, Mark, Cressida and Amanda. Funeral Service Friday 1st May at Chaldon St Peter Parish Church at 1.00pm and afterwards at Parkside Cemetery.

THOMAS - Dr Louisa Allison (née Lodge) died peacefully on April 23rd aged 90. Much loved wife of the late Idris Thomas and mother of Elizabeth, William, Rosemary and Mary. Funeral St Cuthbert's Church, Crayke on Friday May 1st at 2pm.

WILDE - Alan Howard. Peacefully at home on 21st April 1998 aged 80 years. Surrounded by his loving partner Angela, his dear wife Joy and his dear daughter and sons Hannah, Daniel and Duncan. Funeral service to be held in Ostersgyr, Channel Islands on Tuesday 28th April 1998. Enquiries to Beckfords Funeral Services Limited. Tel: 01481 64202

IN MEMORIAM - WAR

BAKER - Harry R.M.L.I. the Chatham. To his memory and to his comrades the ANZACS who fell at Gallipoli 1915-1916.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

SIMONS - Remember Peter, FRCP, consultant physician Medway Hospitals, 25.4.88.

TAIT - In loving memory of Dorothy M. Tait who died April 25th 1986 aged 91. Cyril.

BIRTHDAYS

GAISBURY, Richard. Happy 29th Birthday on 26th April 1998. With love Paul, Danks, Shirley & Martin.

TAURUS My darling Taurean Tigress, I still see your face, as beautiful as day, it's easy to remember, remember my love that way, all I hear is that lonesome sound, the sounds of Whoo, they follow me down, congratulations on your big birthday. Love always, Trevor Fountain.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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75 is no age to be leaving home.

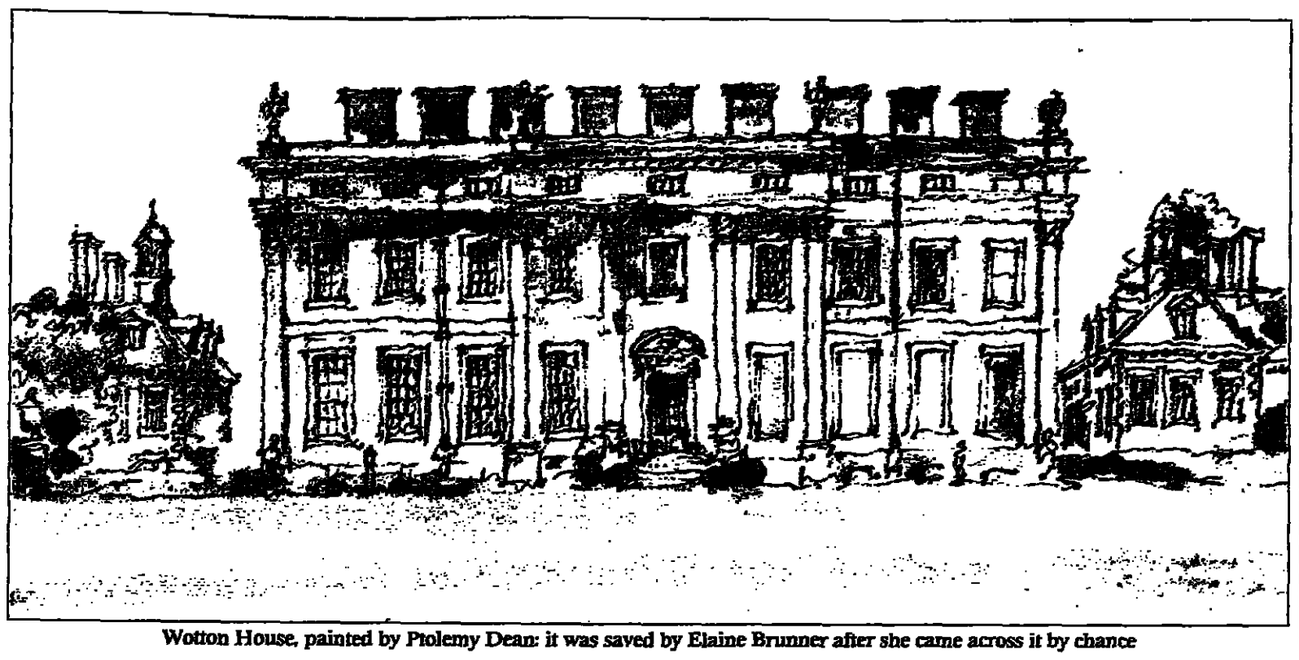
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OBITUARIES

ELAINE BRUNNER

Elaine Brunner, conservationist, died on April 5 aged 90. She was born on December 5, 1907.



Wotton House, painted by Ptolemy Dean: it was saved by Elaine Brunner after she came across it by chance

Wotton in Buckinghamshire was the ruling passion of Elaine Brunner's life. The Grenville family lived there from the 11th century, though the present Wotton House was built — in a slightly retrospective style — between 1704 and 1714 (possibly by Thornhill). By this time the family also owned Stowe, 14 miles away, and they grew grander yet in the following century, filling the parliamentary benches and lending their lustre to Eton and Oxford.

By 1820, when Wotton House suffered its first fire, the family had more quarterings than a small regiment, and it was Richard Plantaganet Temple Nugent Brydges Chandos Grenville, the second Marquess of Chandos, who immediately commissioned Sir John Soane to repair the damage. Given free rein, but working in harmony with the Queen Anne style, Soane added a giant portico on the garden side, and by opening up all three storeys with a cantilevered staircase gave the interior a new lightness and openness.

But a second fire, in 1929, destroyed much of Soane's work, and the house had to be rebuilt once more. A. S. G. Butler's reinterpretation of Soane's interior was described as "Lutyensy" but, like so many houses, Wotton was too expensive to maintain after the Second World War. Sadly neglected, it fell into ruin. By the mid-1950s rooms and roof had been stripped for materials, fireplaces and fittings had gone and parts of the house were used for storage by a farmer. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings had failed, and in 1957 the house was due to be demolished when Brunner arrived there in search of spare columns to go beside her swimming pool. Shortly afterwards she announced to her husband that she had bought a house.

Mary Elaine Howlett was a god-daughter of King George V and Queen Mary — her father was Keeper of the King's Wardrobe — and was brought up in St James's Palace. For a few years she fulfilled her childhood dream of being a dancer, and she even danced for Pavlova.

In 1933 she appeared in Alexander Korda's film *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, but she was undeterred by that precedent and in the same year she married the film director Patrick Brunner. Switching from dancing to acting, she appeared in many productions by the Oxford University Dramatic Society, and got to know some of the Bloomsbury set. During the war, while her husband was in the RAF, she served in the Oxfordshire Police and the Observer Corps, tracking enemy aircraft in style from an open-topped MG.

But her real life's work began in 1957 when she refused to allow Wotton House to be bulldozed for a housing estate, and arranged to buy it from the county council in annual instalments. The Historic Buildings Council granted her £40,000 for restoration — six times what she was paying to buy the house — and she had heavy panelling removed to restore the feeling of airiness. To raise an income she divided the house into flats. Restoration was to continue for the rest of her life, and is not yet complete.

She lived in champagne style and Wotton, approached via a forecourt with magnificent pillars and railings, became the setting for extravagant parties, as well as the home of a collection of antique dolls. She also began the work of restoring the gardens and park, which had been planned by Bridgeman and reworked by Capability Brown.

As at Stowe, there had been a host of follies and garden buildings: Tuscan and Turkish temples, a rotunda, an octagon and a grotto on an island in the large ornamental lake, reached by a bridge by Sanderson Miller. Gradually, parcels of land were bought back, vistas were reopened and avenues of trees were replanted.

Elaine Brunner's love of Wotton perhaps led her to exaggerate the extent to which Soane's work can be recovered, but it is only because she was carried away by the romance of the house that anything remains at all. She lent her support to several groups campaigning to save great houses, but most of all she was impelled to lead by example.

Her husband died in 1966, but she is survived by her daughter.

ROBERT POWELL

Robert Powell, former Headmaster of Sherborne School, died on April 23 aged 93. He was born on October 29, 1904.



ROBERT POWELL was headmaster of Sherborne School, Dorset, from 1950 to 1970, a period in which the challenge facing the public schools as a whole was to adapt rapidly and creatively to the changes sweeping post-war Britain, including the world of education. That Sherborne rose successfully to that challenge, while keeping its reputation as a leading West Country public school secure, and even enhancing it, owed much to Powell's long stewardship.

Robert William Powell was born in Porlock, Somerset. His father, William Powell, was a schoolmaster, and his mother, Agnes Emma, was also a teacher. He was educated at Bristol Grammar School and at Christ Church, Oxford, where he held a classical exhibition and gained a first in classics before going on to read Greats.

Coming down from Oxford, he briefly considered entering the Sudan Civil Service, but on being informed that musical encumbrances were not on the whole encouraged in the bush — it was a case of piccolos rather than pianos — he decided on a career as a schoolmaster.

In 1934 he taught for a term at Repton before being appointed an assistant master at Charterhouse, where he remained until 1940. His service during the war, in which he attained the rank of major, included periods with The Queen's Regiment and The Somerset Light Infantry. He arrived in Normandy on D-Day plus 4 to be assigned the responsibility of escorting his battalion home, Field Marshal Montgomery being reportedly underwhelmed by its performance in the field.

He returned to Charterhouse in 1946 to act as housemaster of Gownboys. His humane and sensitive approach to schoolmastering, a marked feature of his tenure at Sherborne, was already evident. Invited by one less than doting mother towards the end of term to give her son a prophylactic beating "so as to take it out of him for the holidays", he politely declined. Both at Charterhouse and subsequently, during his time as headmaster at Sherborne, the birch was mostly kept in the cupboard.

He was appointed to Sherborne in 1950. In the schoolmaster's *cursus honorum* of the time, Powell was still a relatively young man (just turned 40) to be taking on a major headmastership. New incumbents are naturally compared with their predecessors — that is an occupational hazard — and Powell's own predecessor, Canon A. Ross Wallace (he had "turned his collar" while at the school) had served 17 years as headmaster and made a sizeable reputation both for himself and for Sherborne. Powell was, therefore, taking on a going concern. Enjoying a charter granted by King Edward VI — "of pious memory" as the school prayer puts it — Sherborne had a few months before Powell's arrival celebrated its Quater-Centenary by receiving the Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

But Powell was not content to live on the reputation of the past. There was a natural congruity between his own background in the humanities and the ambitions he held for the school. Though Sherborne remained a school where sporting prowess of all kinds was held in high regard (particularly on the Upper, the field where demigods known as "bloods" play rugger and cricket), Powell set out deliberately to sharpen the place up intellectually. He said he was "tired of prep school headmasters sidling up to him saying that they had a good wee scrum-half who wouldn't pass Common Entrance".

He also made generally sound appointments to the staff, bringing in some able young men to be department heads. The fruits of the new approach were to be noted, in particular, in Sherborne's record of awards at Oxford and Cambridge during the Powell years. There were some 170 open awards altogether, with a remarkable peak being achieved in 1959 when Sherburnians carried off no fewer than 21 Oxbridge awards.

Powell frequently taught the classical sixth himself. Though he had a deep and abiding love of the classics (he saw the Horatian ode with its grace, balance and humour as the epitome of civilisation), he knew that Sherborne could not afford to ignore the realities of the day. Public schools were being tested in the marketplace. A new Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, had spoken convincingly of the "white heat of the technological revolution".

As one of the first building projects of his era, Powell converted the Armoury into new laboratories (swords into ploughshares), and later he oversaw the construction of the Turing science block, named after Alan Turing, an old boy whom many consider the father of the computer age.

To staff and pupils alike, he was known as "Chief" throughout his time. In fact, he was seldom pompous or dictatorial.

He had a wry, almost self-depreciating sense of humour. If an aeroplane flew over Sherborne's medieval cloisters in the middle of a reading of *The Agamemnon*, he would tend to sigh melodramatically and say "Let us pause awhile as progress passes".

Sherborne did not follow other major public schools in opening up its sixth form to girls. With Sherborne Girls School on the doorstep, this was probably not realistic. But the school was not immune to other modernising tendencies. The School Inspectors decreed that lavatories should have doors, for example, while various sartorial innovations were permitted. On the whole, the difficulties Powell faced towards the end of his tenure were more wearisome than life-threatening.

That said, Powell's last years as headmaster were possibly less happy than his early ones. He was not wholly convinced that the young men in his charge were actually ready for the kinds of freedom which society seemed prepared to accord them.

Always a Westcountryman at heart, after his retirement from Sherborne in 1970, Powell went to live in Child Okeford, near Sturminster Newton, in Dorset. For the next 14 years he taught Greek, Latin and English to the girls of nearby Hanford School, while pursuing at the same time his love of fishing, music and, latterly, Romanesque art and architecture. He also served as the treasurer of the South Dorset Conservative Association.

He is survived by his wife Charity and a son.

DUDLEY HOLROYD

Dudley Holroyd, organist and master of the choristers at Bath Abbey, 1967-1985, died of cancer in Bath on April 13 aged 64. He was born in Halifax on April 19, 1933.

ALTHOUGH he spent the last 30 years of his life in the West Country, Dudley Holroyd was a popular organist well known to the hundreds of musicians whom he encountered as he lectured, performed and examined throughout the land. As organist and master of the choristers at Bath Abbey, he brought a new awareness of liturgical music to the city. His proudest moment came when the Queen visited the Abbey in 1973 to commemorate the anniversary of the coronation of King Edgar, the first King of all England, on that site a thousand years previously.

John Dudley Holroyd was born in Halifax and never lost his Yorkshire directness. He was an only child; his father was an office clerk while his mother had worked in a mill from the age of 12. Although the family were Nonconformists, he sang as a boy in the choir at Halifax Parish Church. He studied chemistry to degree level on day-release courses, while spending the first seven years of his working life in the laboratory of a local sewage works.

Despite coming from a non-musical background, Holroyd always had a keen ear. Later in life he recalled how as a child he would imitate the actions of a musician: "Even when I was two, I played a game pulling out the organ stops." Unquenchable in his enthusiasm, he often journeyed by train from Halifax to York Minster, where the legendary Francis Jackson held court as director of music.

Jackson regularly allowed the youngster onto the organ bench and, unknown to the worshippers below in the vast expanse of York Minster, the professional would slip aside to allow Holroyd to play the final verse of a hymn.

During his twenties Holroyd studied for the Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists in the evening and graduated in music from Trinity College Dublin at the age of 27. He also held the Archbishop of Canterbury's Diploma in Church Music and subsequently, in 1984, completed an MA at Birmingham University where his thesis was on the six organ symphonies of Louis Vierne.

His first position as an organist was at All Souls Church, Halifax; subsequent appointments in Leeds and Hastings took him on in 1964 to High Wycombe Parish Church, where he doubled up as director of music at Aylesbury Grammar School, before securing the coveted post at Bath in 1967.

The Abbey's music was then at a low ebb and Holroyd raised standards and extended the repertoire, bringing a new dimension to Sunday services. Although disadvantaged at the Abbey because, unlike most cathedrals, it has no choir school, Holroyd made it his business to go out for local talent. He took great pleasure in nurturing generations of schoolboys and turning them into fine musicians.

An *affaire* with a chorister's mother, whom he subsequently married as his second wife, brought about a messy departure from the Abbey, but Holroyd remained in Bath, teaching at the college of higher education and conducting various local choirs and orchestras. A year ago, as director of music of Wells Cathedral voluntary choir, he set up the Association of Cathedral Voluntary Choirs, an organisation established to deputise during choir holidays at leading Anglican cathedrals.

He made several recordings on the organ of Bath Abbey, and oversaw its renovation in 1971. He also performed at the annual British Legion Service of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall and appeared on ITV's Sunday religious programme *Highway* with Sir Harry Secombe.

His first marriage, in 1958 to Dorothy Cockroft, was dissolved and in 1988 he married Patricia Hayler. He is survived by her and by the two sons of his first marriage.



MILESTONES



Linda (Lady) McCartney, photographer and vegetarian campaigner, died of cancer on April 19 aged 56. She was born in New York on September 24, 1941.

Although she and Yoko Ono were accused of breaking up the Beatles, Linda McCartney kept her husband, Paul, happy for nearly 30 years. An American photographer who met him at the launch of *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in 1967, she married him in 1969, and joined him — despite being almost entirely unmusical — in his new band, Wings. Professionally, this proved an embarrassment for her, but Paul was glad to escape from Beatlemania, and Linda made sure that he and their four children lived relatively normally for multi-millionaires. She converted them to vegetarianism, and then set out to convert everyone else, with cookbooks and her own-name range of vegetarian foods.

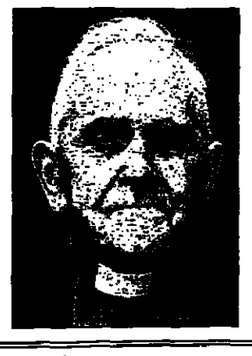
Obituary published on April 21.

The Right Rev Trevor Huddleston, KCMG, died on April 20 aged 84. He was born on June 15, 1913.

In the opinion of Nelson Mandela, no British citizen did more for the black people of South Africa than Trevor Huddleston. Mandela's verdict was reflected in the invitation to Huddleston to open the ANC conference of 1991. Huddleston had been sent by the Anglican Order of the Resurrection to South Africa in 1943 to be priest-in-charge of the its mission in Sophiatown, then a native quarter of Johannesburg. In the 1950s he became one of the fiercest critics of apartheid, and his book *Naught for your Comfort* became a world bestseller in 1956. He was summoned back to England, though he later worked as a bishop in Tanzania and Mauritius.

But South Africa remained his focus, and he became president of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, seeing it through to its triumph.

Obituary published on April 21.



Octavio Paz, poet and essayist, died on April 19 aged 84. He was born on March 31, 1914.

Widely read in world literatures, the Mexican poet Octavio Paz was publishing before he was 20, and became an indispensable literary guide to a society which has buried an ancient Indian past under an invasive Spanish culture. His early, and best, poetry explores human eroticism — which, as he explained, "does not have its roots in animal sexuality, [but] is something human beings have invented". He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1990, but had also served as a diplomat from 1945 to 1968. His prose revealed his own confusions, torn as he was between a reverence for the past and the necessity of modern reform.

Obituary published on April 21.



Constantine Karamanlis, Prime Minister of Greece, 1955-63 and 1974-80, died on April 23 aged 91. He was born on February 23, 1907.

First elected to the Greek Parliament in 1935, Constantine Karamanlis did not step down from his last term as President until 60 years later. He was a successful Cabinet Minister and Prime Minister in the 1950s and early 1960s, before in defeat and disappointment going to live in Paris for 11 years. While he was away, power was seized by a military junta. But Karamanlis then made a triumphant return to Athens to re-establish democracy. A new constitution was soon put in place. Having brought Greece back within the fold of European nations, he relinquished power in 1980, then serving as President.

Obituary published on April 24.

James Earl Ray, convicted murderer of Martin Luther King, died in captivity on April 23 aged 70. He was born on March 28, 1928.

The shooting of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King, in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, sparked off riots across America and led to a huge manhunt. Two months later, James Earl Ray, a small-time crook on the run from a Missouri jail, was arrested in London. The following March he pleaded guilty to King's murder — so avoiding a possible death sentence — and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. Three days later he began to recant, and with America longing to find a conspiracy, a national obsession was launched.

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased person's whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified, after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

PARTICULARS OF NOTICE UNDER SECTION 27 TRUSTEE ACT 1925
Name of Deceased: Ellen Scott
Address: Flat 4a, 28 Arkwright Road, London NW3
Description: Widow
Date of Death: 4th July 1997
Name and address of persons to whom Notice of claims is to be given: BLACK, GRAF & CO., 14/15 COLEGE CRESCENT, LONDON NW3 5LL
Name of Administrator: Joseph Walton of 58 Borrowdale Gardens, Low-Fell, Gateshead Tyne and Wear
Date on or before which Notice of claim must be given: 1st July 1998
Dated: 14 April 1998
Signed: BLACK GRAF
Capacity: Solicitors acting on behalf of the Administrator

SEABROOKE, NANCY CLARA of Denville Hall Nursing Home, 62 Deck's Hill Road, Northwood, Middlesex (formerly of 2 New Row, St Martins Lane, London WC2) died on 18 March 1998 particulars to AMERY-PARKES Solicitors of LAW COURTS CHAMBERS, 33 CHANCERY LANE, LONDON WC2A 1EN before 26 June 1998

TUNER Miss Isabella Margaret of Landsberg House, Bath Road, Padworth, Reading died on 10th April 1998 Particulars to SARJEANT & SHEPPARD Solicitor(s) of 160 Friar Street, Reading RG1 1HE before 29th June 1998

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARITY COMMISSION
Charity: The Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross
Scheme transferring property.
Reference:
PC-222289/92453-CIX(Lds)
The Charity Commissioners have made a Scheme for this charity. A copy can be seen for the next month at Pinner & Co, 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3LH or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to St Alban's House, 57-60 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4QX quoting the reference above.

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice to All creditors to send in particulars of debts or claims
Company Number: 03217283
Name of company: PAGEANTRY 2000 LIMITED
(t/a DERWENT MARKETING)
(In voluntary liquidation)
NOTICE is hereby given that the Creditors of the above-named Company are required on or before 30 June 1998 to send in their names and addresses, with particulars of their Debts or Claims to the undersigned BRIAN ANDREW SCOTT of JOHNSON TIDSALL, 81 SURTON ROAD, DERBY, DE1 1TJ the Liquidator of the said Company. In default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.
Dated 9 April 1998
B.A. SCOTT (LIQUIDATOR)

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERS
MERCECALL LIMITED
Registered number: 2479919
Nature of business:
Property investment
Trade classification: 58
Date of appointment of administrative receivers: 15 April 1998
Name of person appointing the administrative receivers: Saudi International Bank Al-Bank Al-Saudi International Limited
Name of administrative receivers:
Kevin James David Hills
Mark Charles Batson
Office holder number: 8722, 6705
Address: Price Waterhouse, No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9QL

LEGAL NOTICES

POSSIBLE BENEFICIARIES

World RUTH FLORENCE LOWDEN, WILLIAM EDWIN STURMAN(GENNERY or any other issues of EDWARD (EDWINO CHARLES) GENNERY or any person knowing their whereabouts or claiming to be related to them or to MARY GENNERY, please contact the Public Trustee of Queensland, Box 1449 GPO, Brisbane, 4001 Queensland Australia and provide full details of their claim. (Quoting reference R285-2267689).
Notice is given that on or after 31 July, 1998 the Public Trustee intends, pursuant to section 132 of the Public Trustee Act 1978, to proceed to distribute the assets in the estate of MARY GENNERY late of Palmer Chester Hospital Brisbane in the State of Queensland having regard only to the persons whose claims have then been established to his satisfaction who appear to him to have the best claim in law.

G E Klein
PUBLIC TRUSTEE
Order No. P513

LICENSING ACT 1964
TAKE NOTICE that we, MICHAEL JASAPHEMI AKOMOJOH of 46 Shere House, Great Dover Street, London SE1 having for the past six months resided on the trade or calling of licensee and FRANCESCA FUNMILAYO AJEGBAYO of 31 Calverton House, Albany Road, London, SE5 having for the past six months resided on the trade or calling of licensee intend to apply at the licensing sessions to be held at Camberwell Green Magistrates' Court, D'Eyncourt Road, London, SE5 at 10:30 am on the 11th day of May 1998 for the grant to us of a Justices Licence authorising us to sell by retail intoxicating liquor of all descriptions for consumption off the premises situate at 40 Denmark Hill, Camberwell, London, SE5 and known as Costcutter.
Dated the 15th day of April 1998.
Pollig & Co. - authorised agents on behalf of the applicants

NOTICE OF THE APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVER
Name of Company:
Bowaven Textiles Limited
Number of Company: 00923794
Full name(s) of administrative receiver(s):
David John Blenkiron, Peter Sheldon Parkinson
Address: Price Waterhouse, The Quay, 30 Channel Way, Ocean Village, SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 3QG
Date of Appointment: 20 April 1998
Appointor: Midland Bank Plc
Nature and date of instrument conferring power to appoint: Debenture dated 1st June 1983 and supplemental charge dated 28 December 1991
(Short description of assets of the company (if any) to which appointment does not apply: N/A
Signed this 21 April 1998
D J Blenkiron
Joint Administrative receiver

Company Number: 03217283
Name of Company: PACHANTRY 2000 LIMITED
(t/a DERWENT MARKETING)
At an EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Members of the above-named Company, duly convened and held at JOHNSON TIDSALL, 81 SURTON ROAD, DERBY, DE1 1TJ on 9 April 1998 the following EXTRAORDINARY RESOLUTION was duly passed:-
"That it has been proved to the satisfaction of this Meeting that the Company cannot, by reason of its liabilities, continue its business, and that it is advisable to wind-up the same, and accordingly that the Company be wound up voluntarily, and that BRIAN ANDREW SCOTT of JOHNSON TIDSALL be and he hereby nominated Liquidator for the purposes of the winding-up.
I. LILLEY
CHAIRMAN

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE
0171-782 7344 OR FAX: 0171-782 7827
Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Equities end week on dull note

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
846	505	**Allied Domecq**	626	+3	3.9	16.0
412½	295	Bulmer (HP)	341½	-2½	5.4	10.6
42½	21½	Burn Stewart	21½		9.9	
764	432	**Diageo†**	721	+31½	2.5	31.5
900	770	Glenmorangie A	795		2.1	19.0
325	258	Highland Distl	330½	-2	3.5	14.7
213½	160	Matthew Clark	200½		12.5	6.5
59½	39½	Morgan W	45	+½	8.6	
3021½	1368½	SA Breweries	2000		1.7	

BANKS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1603½	1178½	ABN-AMRO	1540½	-6½	2.0	22.5
1345	1010	**Abbey Natl**	1155	-10	3.3	17.7
1032	585	**Alliance & Leicst**	830	-5	3.1	16.7
834½	587½	Allied Irish	824½	+6	2.2	23.1
458½	376½	Aus New Z	445½	-10	4.6	
5416¾	3881½	Bank America	5203¾	-21½		
813	431	**Bank Scotland**	722½	+11½	1.7	19.1
1996	1068	**Barclays†**	1764	-14	2.6	18.0
1309	916½	Bk of Ireland	1240	-25	1.7	27.2
£102¾	6790¾	Citicorp	9418¾	-34¾		
1653½	1565½	Commerzbk	1621½	+3½	3.2	
543½	290½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	416½	+9½	0.9	
5146½	3668½	Deutsche Bk	6146½	+3½	1.2	
1206½	1153½	Espirito Santo	1168½	-3½	3.1	
531	245½	Fuji Bank Y	341½	+5	1.1	67.4
2073	1294	**HSBC†**	1956	-6	3.4	14.8
2002	937	HSBC HK†	1749	+4	3.6	14.0
1000	700½	**Halifax†**	831½	-3½	2.6	24.1
842½	642½	Irish Perm†	827½	-7½	2.0	24.0
1090	698	**Lloyds TSB†**	937	-32½	2.3	24.9
916½	770½	Nat Aust Bk	895½	-21	4.2	
1237	751	**Nat Westt**	1140	-25	3.5	24.3
673	575	Northern Rock	609	-19½	2.2	22.7
1099	565	**Ryl Bk Scot**	910	-23	2.9	17.8
1050	528	**Stand Chart†**	912½	-2½	2.5	14.8
£164¾	£164¾	Wells Fargo	£164¾		1.9	
439	385½	Westpac	417½	-15	3.4	
400	308	**Woolwich†**	335	-8½	3.5	17.2

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1180	873	**Bass▼**	1100	+5	3.1	19.7
61½	50½	Brit for the 8th	59		4.0	17.6
162½	144½	Burtonwd Brw	161½	-1	5.4	14.2
144½	110	City Centre Rest	142	-½	2.5	
1140	581	**Compass Gp**	1000	-9	1.2	34.8
327½	280½	Eldridge P 'A'	326½		2.3	16.5
373½	251½	Enterprise Inns	373½		2.5	20.6
475	425	Fuller Sm 'A'	472½		2.8	15.2
477½	400	Greenalls Grp	461½	+1	4.5	11.5
760	676½	Greene King	694		3.0	14.2
285½	197½	Grosvenor Inns	286	-½	2.8	37.3
335	260	Groupe Chez Ger	332		1.3	22.9
246½	214½	Hardy Hanson	243½		5.9	10.6
2175	1825	Holt J	1900	+75	4.5	
75	62	Inn Business	73		3.2	11.0
306	279	Mansfield	295		3.1	12.2
320½	254½	Marston Thmp	300½	+½	3.5	10.6
442½	430½	Morland	435½		3.9	10.7
382½	294½	Old Eng Pub	362½		0.8	28.6
31½	21½	Paramount	26			
828½	676½	PizzaExpress	780½	-1	0.6	35.2
377½	297½	Ramsdens (H)	302½		2.1	28.1
379½	302½	Regent Inns	379½		1.2	27.1
227	140½	SFI	220	+½	0.5	38.4
950	717	**Scot & New**	867	38	3.2	17.3
288½	227	Vaux Group	275		5.0	11.7
343	273½	Wetherspoon JD	323½	-½	0.8	34.8
1145	850	**Whitbread**	1079	+10	2.8	18.5
530	469	Wolvrhmptn D	516½		4.5	11.7
487½	381	Yates Bros	481		0.8	34.6
667½	637½	Young 'A'	647½		3.0	26.8

BUILDING MATERIALS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
68½	49½	Aggregate Indst	67½	-½	3.2	23.4
422	290	BPB	422	+18	2.9	19.3
106½	83½	Baggeridge Brk	91	-½	4.8	12.3
62½	44½	Blockleys	54½		1.0	60.8
407	271½	**Blue Circlet**	352	+8	4.1	13.3
123½	98½	Breedon PLC	115½	-1	6.5	
192½	125½	Br Dredging	191½	+7	4.1	
929	705	CRH	868	-1	1.2	21.5
62½	47½	Calabread Rby	60½		8.1	4.9
149½	107½	Caper	145½		5.6	12.5
215½	158½	Caradon	196½	+1	5.4	13.2
116½	100½	Caradon pf	116½		7.8	
130½	90½	Chelton Gp†	103½		5.2	7.6
219	217½	Dyson (J&J)	218½		3.3	13.0
130	107½	Dyson 'A'	107½		6.7	6.4
60½	43½	Ennstone	50			
197½	147	Epwin	159	-7	8.1	8.4
115½	101½	Gibbs & Dandy†	114½		4.4	10.6
191	154	Graham Grp	189½		4.0	18.9
282½	227½	Halstead (J)†	235		5.3	15.7
395	245	Hanson†	361½	-3½	4.2	12.5
365	179	Hepworth	250	+6½	4.5	
164	120½	Hewetson	163½	+2	4.9	10.8
239½	202½	Heywd Williams	239½	+4½	7.2	9.1
66	43	Ibstock†	50	-½	5.5	
365	250	Johnston	305		5.0	
107½	84½	Lilleshall†	92½	-1½	6.8	9.1
118	82½	Marley†	111½		5.6	9.6
145½	120	Marshalls	141½		4.8	
412½	326½	Meyer Intl	399		3.9	14.9
77½	64½	Norcros	69		3.4	15.2
134	103½	Pilkington	127½	-1	4.6	16.3
190	156½	Polypipe†	180	+3	2.4	13.4
24	14½	Quiligotti	16½			14.3
1065	740½	RMC Gp†	1043	-2	3.2	14.9
110½	78½	Ruberoid†	97½	-2½	6.3	
139½	111½	Rugby Group†	126	+4½	4.0	18.1
85	76½	Russell (A)	79½		4.8	
253	195½	SIG†	212½	+1½	4.6	10.8
2½	1½	SMP	2			10.9
227½	220½	Sharpe & Fisher†	226½		3.5	14.0
25	14½	Spring Ram	20½		0.6	
268½	144½	Streamline Hldgst	260½	-2	4.4	
130½	93	Tarmac†	116		6.1	14.0
130	83	Titon	83		7.8	8.8
628½	457	Travis Perkins†	571½		2.4	17.6
95	60½	Tudor†	82½		4.5	10.6
324½	180½	Ultraframe	317½		1.4	33.6
570	410	**Wolseley**	430	-7½	3.4	13.7

CHEMICALS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
188	134½	Albright & Wilt	170½	-½	4.2	18.9
204½	110½	Allied Colloids	204½		2.0	27.7
127½	106½	Amber Ind	122½		5.9	9.7
107½	91½	Amberley Gp	91½		2.3	15.4
100	72	Alltone Ex	98			14.7
2690¾	2003½	BASF DM	2616¾	+37½	2.6	
1109	850	**BOC**	963	-24	3.5	16.6
422½	331½	BTP	410	-5	3.6	19.6
2737½	2131½	Bayer DM50	2584½	-34½	2.2	
126	94½	Brent Chems	95½	+1	4.0	10.8
327½	210½	Br Vita†	327	-½	3.3	16.5
187½	128½	Brunner Mond	174	-2½	6.2	9.5
296	266½	Canning (W)	278		4.2	13.0
229½	155	City Technology	195		2.4	37.7
474	234	Courtaulds	447½	-1	3.7	19.2
447½	351½	Croda	446½	-1	2.4	21.2
260	203½	Doeflex	259½	-½	4.2	10.8
152½	116	Elements	145	+1½		33.0
313½	260½	Elis & Everard	273½	+1	4.7	11.7
62½	53½	Euro Colour	56½		5.4	10.1
178½	138½	Gibbon	153½	-2½	5.7	10.4
94½	64½	Hickson†	90		1.1	15.7
2425	2096½	Hoechst	2325	+25	2.2	
1300	738½	ICI	1085	+1	2.9	43.1
293	189	Inspect	293	-2½	2.9	13.2
190½	141½	Kalon†	190½	+1½	4.1	25.7
837	605	Laporte†	796	+15	3.2	16.1
74	47	Meristem	74	+2½	4.1	
35	30	Metrotect	31		4.2	7.8
380	320	Porvair	377½	-2½	2.1	21.0
231	181½	Scapa	188½		3.9	10.2
22	16½	Sutcliffe Spkn	19½		7.5	8.4
1761½	1455½	Takeda Chem	1671½	-14½	0.4	31.0
248	221½	Victrex	232½	+3	2.6	21.0
685	595	Wassalline Rt	612½		5.5	
240	190	Yorks Grp	190		6.5	11.6
385½	282½	Yule Catto†	383½	+5	3.3	15.7

CONSTRUCTION

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
58½	19½	AAF Inds	47			
375	330	Abbey	375		2.2	28.2
427½	332½	Allen	422½		3.6	30.8
174	114	Amect	173½		3.6	17.1
735	400	Amey†	717½	+2½	1.9	23.1
1056	722½	Andrews Sykes†	1056		1.8	
261	180	Ashtead	254½	+1	1.1	31.7
48½	28½	Avonside†	42		4.5	
35½	26½	Band	32½		4.6	15.5
71	48½	Barcom	70		2.7	17.3
339	224	Barratt Devs†	322	-1	3.6	14.1
232	161½	Beazer†	191½	-1	4.4	10.8
401½	320½	Bellway	372½	-6½	3.2	12.3
25½	18½	Bellwinch	23½			8.1
95½	46½	Ben Bailey†	71½	-1	3.8	8.3
768½	582½	Berkeley Gp	751	+7½	1.6	13.2
167½	146	Bett Bros	154		5.5	4.6
315	270	Boot (Henry)	315		3.4	
276½	192½	Bovis Homes	265	+1	4.4	11.6
143½	105	Brandon Hirst	142½		3.9	17.4
41½	30½	Britannia Grp	40½		4.4	15.2
155½	103	Bryant	131		4.8	12.1
127½	102½	CALA	125		3.9	7.7
4	3	Carrington & Arm	3½			
136½	83½	Clarke T†	128½	+2	5.9	8.8
41½	30	Costain	40	-½		
125½	97½	Countryside	114½	-2½	3.3	10.8
142	94½	Crest Nicholson	126½		3.7	10.8
118½	85½	Cussins	115		5.0	
210	160	Eve Group	205	-2½	3.2	15.2
22½	19½	Galliford	21½		6.0	12.6
1100	1015	Gleeson (MJ)	1025		2.3	15.0
175	115	Havelock Euro	116½	-5	5.2	
192	152	Hewden-Stuart	191	-½	2.4	16.8
38	20	Howard Hldgs	21½		5.8	21.4
681	369½	Jarvis	613½	-15	1.3	31.5
251	181	Kellert	240	+½	2.7	
232½	199½	Kier†	217½		4.2	10.7
370½	309½	Laing John	360½		3.6	19.1
125	117½	Laing 6.4% Cv Pf†	121		6.6	
14½	8½	Lovell (YJ)	12½	+½		
212½	155½	Maunders (J)†	209½		3.8	12.7
180	133½	McAlpine (A)	166½		5.8	
195	113½	McCarthy & S	153½		2.4	14.3
135	70	McInerney†	135		0.9	
225½	171½	Morgan Sindall	221½	+3	3.0	13.5
397½	301	Morrison Cons	378½	-1	1.8	21.2
127	77½	Mowlem (J)†	112½		4.4	10.3
299½	182½	Persimmon†	247½	+1½	5.1	11.6
109½	80½	Peterhouse	93½		5.1	
120	112	Pochins	120		2.9	13.3
149½	116	Prowting	140	-½	3.6	12.9
198	142½	Redrow†	171½	-1	2.7	12.7
322½	222½	Spandert	310		1.5	17.9
94½	75½	Swan Hill†	75½	-2	4.6	13.8
142½	132½	Try Homes†	124		7.3	10.0
238	174	Taylor Woodrw†	225	-½	2.0	17.1
283½	190	Tilbury Douglas†	255		2.5	
29½	21½	Try Group†	26		2.9	9.5
78½	63½	Vibroplant	77½	+1½	6.5	
135½	109½	Walnmones	133½		4.5	13.8
58	42½	Ward Hldgs	50		6.5	7.1
272½	228½	Westbury▲	256	-½	3.4	12.9
15	12½	Wiggins	13½			19.4
191	139½	Wilson (C)	177		4.0	
689½	517	Wilson Bowdn	689½	+6	2.3	14.0
140½	92½	Wimpey G†	126	+2	5.7	10.5

DISTRIBUTORS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
248½	182½	Action Cp Spist	243½		1.4	20.3
355	297½	Adam & Harvey	325	-12½	8.7	4.9
31	9½	Alexanders	17½			
2	1	Arc Br Eng	1½			58.8
457	356	600 Group	355		7.4	10.7
20½	12½	Bearing Power	17½			
34½	34½	Bond 'A'	34½		3.3	5.5
702	550	Brammer	699	+2	3.1	15.6
16	10½	Bridgend Gp	14½		1.7	
102½	79	Brit Fittings†	102½	+3	6.2	
372½	345	Callyns	362½		4.5	8.4
189½	170½	Car Group	181½		3.2	17.2
155½	134½	Caverdale	155½		3.3	
54	31½	Cook (DC)	48½	+1½	6.3	7.0
130½	96½	Dag Motors	119		9.2	
125½	105½	Dickinsons E	114½		3.3	8.9
266	217½	Diploma	236½		7.7	9.6
601	450	Electrocomponents	581½	+2½	1.7	31.3
186	143½	Eurodis Elec	149½		4.4	25.7
107½	84½	European Mtr	98½		7.5	7.7
305	250½	Evans Halshaw	282½	+1½	7.5	9.0
67½	39½	Fife Indmar	62		7.5	7.0
400½	357½	Finelist Grp	388	+½	2.7	15.2
37½	21½	Gardiner	34½	-½	5.1	10.4
82½	60½	Glenchewton	70		3.6	9.9
135½	89½	Gowrings	124½		3.5	11.8
18½	13	HR Owen	15		6.7	6.8
402	340	Headlam	381½	-1	2.3	
160	135	Holders Tech	137½		6.1	
120	77½	ISA Intl	79½		5.3	6.0
290	136½	Inchcape	217½		5.4	26.2
80	57½	Jacks (Wm)	67½		6.7	
535	351½	Kwik-Fit	503½	-4	1.6	22.6
598	422½	Lex Service	598		3.7	15.2
123	102	Lookers	116½		8.9	7.9
500	351	Menzies John	500		3.5	16.2
5½	4	Middleton	4½		2.8	11.0
19½	16½	Midsames	17½		3.5	
306	242	Nortion	285		3.9	11.5
291	206½	Northamber	208½	-1½	1.8	13.8
342	296½	Parkell	298½	-1½	3.6	
312½	249½	Pendragon	293½		4.6	13.9
342½	167½	Perry Gp	218½		5.6	
443	272	Premier Farnell	375		4.4	14.5
162½	119½	Quadic Group†	161		6.0	
285	140	REA	140		2.9	
5½	1½	Reece	2			
37½	30½	Reg	32½			
12½	4½	Ronson	7	+½		
5½	3½	Ross Gp	4½			
112½	97½	Ryland	106½		5.2	8.1
31	25½	SEP Ind	27	+½	5.8	14.0
30	16½	Salfree	17½		8.6	
287½	211½	Sanderson Bramll	280½		2.5	10.2
54½	48	Sedgemoor	52½	-½	4.1	13.2
273½	226½	Synter	280		3.3	12.1
195½	167½	Time Products	175		8.9	7.2
210	132½	Trust Motor Grp	185	+1	1.7	3.2
432	390	UniCo	406½		1.8	21.7
124	88½	United Oseas Gp	111½	+2½	1.3	
299½	244½	Vardy (Reg)†	285½	-1	3.4	13.4
900	665	VF Elect	750		2.6	23.1
157½	140	Wyko	152½		2.7	14.4
150½	135	Young (H)	150½		3.8	10.7

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
330	297	Antofagasta	327½		2.2	28.6
336½	229	Ascot Hldgs	326½	-6½	3.5	12.5
642	522½	Bowen Hill	603½	-9½	3.3	16.8
697½	466½	**BAT†**	567	+2	4.6	14.7
43½	33	Bentley Inv	35½		8.9	8.6
251	167	Cookson	250½		3.7	14.6
277½	217½	Coralt	266½		5.6	8.8
585	410	DCC	525	-1	1.9	19.6
383	304	Gallaher	328	+6	7.3	9.3
450½	288	Hutch Whamp	391	-6½	3.2	
474½	383½	Imperial Tob	418	-21½	6.4	10.3
335½	231½	Jardine Mast	255½	-½	5.9	
115	74½	Lonrho	107	+3½	5.5	19.6
575	474½	Powell Duffryn	543½	+5	5.7	14.1
147	101	Staveley	137½		8.8	16.7
368½	259	Swire Pacific	316	-6½	4.3	
339½	241½	TT Group	338½		3.3	12.7
384½	288	Tomkins	363	+12½	3.3	15.4
230½	207½	Unigate	230		7.1	11.7
505	415	Wardle Storeys	502½		5.1	15.4
381½	301½	Wassall	320	-4	2.4	15.0
135½	112	Whitecroft	113	-4½	5.1	18.3

ELECTRICITY

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
599	310	**Br Energy**	534	-4	3.3	52.6
873½	600	**Energy Group**	867	-½	3.0	17.4
398	298½	**National Grid▼**	376½	-1	3.8	14.9
700	518½	**National Power**	557	-8	6.3	7.6
900	725	**PowerGen**	789	+17	4.2	12.0
597½	502½	Hydro-Elect	583½	-2	3.9	13.3
599	475	**Scottish Power**	560	+1½	4.3	13.9
580	467	Southern Elec	552	+2	5.0	14.7
579	522	Viridian	579	+3½	4.6	40.5

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
990	715	ARM Holdings	830	-5		
350½	305	Acal	307½		4.1	10.0
1127½	690	Admiral†	1110	-5	0.3	
39½	27½	Amstrad	36½	+½	1.7	
34	26½	Aries	28½		5.3	7.5
129½	106½	Astect	112½	-1	1.7	12.0
70½	43½	Actan	50			
170½	127½	BICC	158	+2	6.5	
82½	51½	Beales Horner	82½	+5	15.5	8.0
345	280	Blick	340	-5	5.1	11.6
504	345½	Bowthorpe†	504	+5½	2.8	19.6
17	12	Bulgin A	14½		6.5	17.6
205½	150½	CML Micro	190		4.0	22.7
27½	10	Chamel Hldgs	14	-½	10.3	4.4
45½	38½	Chloride	44½		1.9	10.7
109½	64½	Clayhithe	106	-½	4.2	11.7
812½	722½	Crityle	812½		2.0	21.8
317½	213½	Delta†	296½	+2	5.4	11.6
451	392	Domino	434		3.5	15.2
77½	51	Dowding Mills†	61		6.5	11.5
290	240	Druck	277½	-2½	0.8	29.9
5665½	4118½	Electrolux 'B'	5390½	-68½	1.8	
24½	17	Emess	22½		3.4	15.8
3284½	2128½	Ericsson 'B'	3087½	-75	0.9	
388	311	Eurotherm	348½	-4½	3.6	15.3
590	463	Fairey Group	562½		2.1	15.9
587½	428	Filtronic	487	-2½	0.4	33.7
17½	7½	Forward Tech	15		2.1	
498	338	**GEC**	494	-3	3.4	22.8
48½	35½	Ind Control	46½		1.5	
22	15	Intelek	16½		7.4	
73	54½	LPA Ind	65½	+3½	4.3	24.1
425	425	Mast	425			
177½	117½	Newmark Tech	137½	-2	1.1	16.0
328	255	Oxford Inst	321½	+14	3.0	11.3
111	23½	Pace Micro	77½	-1	3.2	
5512½	3450	Philips Lmp nv	5471½	+38½	0.9	
88½	38½	Plasmon	70½		1.8	
345	272½	Pressac	288½		1.9	30.9
60½	29	Prestwick	36½		3.7	10.5
462½	279½	Psion	284½	+3½	1.1	27.6
358	243½	Racal Elect	355	-1	2.1	66.9
90½	51½	Radamac	59½		6.7	
425	335	Renishaw	422½		2.7	24.7
1½	1½	Rodime	1½			
277½	191½	Roxboro†	275	+17½	3.3	
287	202½	SDX Bus Sys	276½	-1	1.1	33.7
377½	244	Servomex†	316½	+2½	3.8	15.6
50½	36½	Silverminest	45	-½	4.0	
4993¾	4128½	TDK†	4753¾	-43¾	0.6	
72½	59	TGI	63½		7.0	6.6
110	88½	TLG	106½	+8	4.8	12.6
62	7	Tadpole Tech	15½			
55½	38½	Telemetrix†	47		4.3	11.3
365	230	Telspec	312½			38.3
150½	122½	Thorpe FW†	138½	-4½	4.2	7.5
157½	70½	Total Systems	117½		1.5	25.4
125	100	Tunstall	124	+3½	5.2	17.4
18	7	Ultima Networks	10		10.9	
111	66½	Verity	97½	+3	0.1	
170	84½	Vero†	170	+17½	4.3	15.3
40½	30	Vigico Technology†	31	+½	1.6	
525	460	Volex	522½		5.1	14.3

ENGINEERING

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
280	220	AIM	222½	-10	4.2	10.5
44	28½	ASW	33½			
255	145	Alumasc	177½		6.0	8.1
161	129½	Alvis	156½	+2	2.8	20.0
176½	159½	Ash & Lacy†	173½	-1	5.5	8.2
125	70	Ayrshire Metal	70		9.8	3.9
495	345½	BBA†	495	+9	1.6	20.3
212½	150	BTR†	202		4.8	13.6
87½	68½	BWI	85½		4.8	9.4
85½	61	Babcock	68½	+½	2.3	
8½	6½	Bailey (CH)	8½		3.7	
99	77	Baynes (Charles)†	91½		4.4	13.0
27½	11	Beauford	11½		9.1	
44½	27	Benson Group	44½		4.2	42.1
230½	181½	Beresford	216½	+5	3.2	12.4
97½	84	Bestd Cv Un Ln	94½	+1½	5.3	
1180	867½	Bodycote	1130	+10	1.1	25.8
44½	35½	Booth Inds	38½			
20½	15½	Brasway	18½		6.2	8.3
141	117½	Bridport	127½		4.7	14.3
2090	1525	**Br Aerospace†**	1965	+3	1.2	21.3
162½	122½	Br Steel	158½	-1½	7.9	14.5
156½	136½	Brooke Ind†	143½		4.4	7.9
16½	11	Brunel	11½		5.4	5.3
102½	92½	Bullough	93½		7.8	9.7
36	29	Carbo	29½		8.1	
217½	161½	Castle Eng	162	-1	8.3	9.7
225	183½	Castings	197½		3.3	11.4
215	190	Champion Hill	215		4.7	9.7
750	570	Charter†	677½	-1½	4.6	22.1
155½	110½	Chemring	151½		2.5	
275	235	Clyde Blowers	251		3.5	54.4
1110	732½	Cobham	1072½	-29	1.6	27.8
430	400	Cohen (A)	410			
119½	107½	Concentric	107½		8.5	22.3
220½	184½	David Brown	209½	+2½	5.2	12.5
350	282½	Delta	318½		5.3	10.9
31	16	Eleco	26			10.6
112½	72½	Elliott (B)	107½		3.7	14.3
155½	124½	Expamet†	142½	-1	3.4	13.7
209	147½	FKI	208		3.2	18.9
195½	167½	Fenner	184½	+2	2.9	14.7
2½	1½	Ferrum	1½			
40	29	Firth Hldgs	32½	+½	1.0	24.6
154½	126½	Firth Rixson	143½		2.4	17.5
45½	27½	Flare	29½		4.4	2.6
104	91½	GB Int	97½		5.8	9.9
196½	148½	Garton Eng	179½	-2	5.7	
331½	216½	Glynwed	312½	-11	5.3	12.6
142½	92½	Haden MacLn	142½		2.8	11.5
230	185	Hadleigh	192	+1	4.6	9.1
260	160	Hall Eng	237	+1	4.5	9.3
126½	99½	Halma	122	+1	2.6	16.6
73½	64½	Hampson Ind	67½		1.6	13.8
58½	32½	Hay (Norman)	56½	+1	2.2	
54½	40½	Heywood	43½		4.6	5.8
70½	42½	Hill & Smith	57½		9.1	14.5
107½	65½	How Gp	107½	+5	3.3	
243½	210½	Hunting†	241½		4.1	12.9
487	378	IMI	486	-½	2.9	15.8
624½	467½	Johnson Matth	612½	+1½	2.6	14.9
28½	22½	Jones Stroud	23		8.2	9.5
420	385	Kelsey Ind	385		9.1	6.6
359½	299½	Linread	356	+5	3.4	12.5
32½	23½	Locker (T)	24		5.2	8.8
22½	16½	MS Int	19½		3.8	
460	403½	Mallinson Brmn	426½	-1	2.9	17.7
498½	377½	McKechnie	493	+1	4.4	12.8
167½	155½	McLeod Russel	158½	+1½	5.5	11.5
211	154½	Meggitt	195½		3.0	21.0
99	82½	Melrose	97		5.5	
14½	11½	MetalTech	14			
178½	142½	Metsec	172½	+2	3.7	
357½	237½	Molins†	256		7.4	
472½	392½	Morgan Cruc	457	-10½	4.3	14.5
57½	49½	Polypipe	49½		10.0	6.6
608½	176½	Powerscreen	176½	-3½	7.3	4.6
209½	155½	Quadsceens	156		8.0	8.0
50	27½	Quadrant Grp	40½	-1		
60	50	Ratbert Metal	55			
261½	226½	Renold	229½	+1½	3.6	9.3
95	73	Richardson West	82	+3	8.4	7.0
301½	188	Rolls-Royce	291½	+16	2.6	21.8
395	269	Rotork†	385		3.2	
220	140	Rubicon	185		4.2	13.2
1425	1153½	SKF 'B'	1321½	-32½	3.1	
230	139½	Senior Eng	219½	-9½	2.0	21.3
612½	461½	Smith-Rval	546½	-2½	2.3	
1340	975	Sbda	1380	-50	1.1	24.7
132½	114½	Six Hundred	120½		7.2	8.5
950½	702	**Smiths Indt**	863	-23½	2.7	19.3
18½	11	Solvera	11½		2.6	
651½	542½	Spirax-Sarco†	651½	+14	2.6	17.0
326½	262½	Sterling Ind	310½		4.1	11.3
600	434	TI	578	-1	2.8	18.1
106½	88½	Tinsley (E)	98½		7.9	9.1
87½	64½	TransTec	77½		4.5	
277½	270	Triplex Lloyd	277½		3.2	18.8
417	347½	Ultra Elect	379		2.4	18.6
68	56½	Unit Inds	62½		5.3	8.8
242½	198	Vickers	237½	+1½	3.8	14.7
10½	7½	Villiers Grp	10			
703	584	Vdec	663½	+2½	2.6	12.4
807½	740	Vosper Thorny	777½	+2½	4.3	12.0
320	280	Wagon Ind	306	-½	4.9	13.6
314½	222½	Weir†	279		4.0	13.0
172½	137½	Wellington Hldgt	164½	-1	6.3	
81½	55	Wescott	68½		2.9	15.2
835	750	Whatman	782½	+10	2.5	20.5
58½	42½	Widney	53½		8.2	16.8

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
148½	123	Adwest	132		5.9	10.3
160	150	Airflow Stream	151	-1½	6.6	10.9
685	617	Avon Rubber	670		3.4	15.0
345	305	Boxtron	305		3.0	
162	114½	Britax	161	-1	2.5	17.8
323½	251½	Dennis	322½	+29	3.9	
376½	277½	First Tech	373½	+2	1.3	26.2
1770	1052½	**GKN†**	1727	+57	1.7	22.0
4487½	3418½	General Mtr	4116¾	-48½	2.9	
535	414½	Henlys†	532½	+3½	3.9	13.5
2326½	1991½	Honda Motor	2184½	+45½	0.4	
480	384½	Laird	422½	-1½	3.4	11.2
269	194	**LucasVarity**	264		2.1	15.8
230	158½	Mayflower†	230	+2	1.5	22.5
127½	95½	Sylone	110		7.4	9.1
261	253½	T & N	259		4.4	15.0
31½	22½	Toad	26½	-1		
42½	36½	Wilshaw	40½		2.6	10.9

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
670	530	**AB Food**	570	+8	2.2	17.7
270	215	Acatos & Hutch	232	+1	5.7	24.5
37	24½	Albert Fisher	30½	+½	14.8	11.0
285	195	Banks (S C)	196½		7.3	7.1
500	417	Barr (AG)	497½		4.3	
44½	34	Bensons Crisp	36		6.5	7.7
360	209	Booker†	260½	-10½	11.5	11.6
845	571½	Brake Bros	843½		1.7	
103½	85	CPL Aromas	94		6.4	27.1
905	600	**Cadbury-Schwt**	823	-22	2.2	22.1
262	147½	Carrs Milling	158		9.2	5.3
114½	70½	Cavaghan†	114½		4.0	20.2
367½	234½	Cranswick	267½	+3	4.9	12.8
366½	253	Dairy Crest Group	363½	+1½	3.5	15.3
379	273½	Dalgety†	366	+1	3.3	
67	37½	Daniels St	53½	+1	1.2	17.6
539½	375	Devro†	539		2.2	22.8
129½	99	Finlay (James)	120½	+½	3.5	
530	404	Geest	515		2.5	20.4
15½	8½	Global	14½		6.1	18.3
380	285	Greencore	379		2.3	20.8
211½	164½	Hazlewood Fds	195	-3	4.6	14.0
185	142	Hillsdown	175	+½	7.1	10.5
410	392	Linton Park	394		5.1	8.5
102	86	Matthews (B)†	101½	+2½	5.3	15.5
227½	209½	Nichols (V)†	214½		4.6	11.3
240	182	Nthn Foods	220	-5	5.6	12.6
20	15	Nthmrn Fn	15½		1.6	8.1
112½	89½	Paramount Foodst	103½		6.3	
52	28½	Pascoe's	36			
147½	103½	Perkins Food	131½		3.6	
93½	69½	Plant & Gen	78	-½	2.6	
92	60	Scotty Farm†	63		6.0	
34½	19½	Sims Food	21½	+½		2.3
583	450	Tate & Lyle	515	-3	3.6	13.9
151	111½	Treatt	120		6.2	13.2
738½	591½	Unigate	719½	-3½	3.6	17.3
665	345	**Unilevert**	620	-15	1.7	30.8
4737½	3500	Unilever (NV)	4400	-16¾	1.5	12.2
288	216½	Utd Biscuits	243	+2½	5.4	17.3
62½	44½	WT Foods	57½		3.3	22.1

HEALTHCARE

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
442½	318½	Alliance UniChem	408½		3.0	17.8
165	135	Assoc Nursg	165		2.9	26.0
832½	693	Bespak	832½	+2½	1.8	25.6
525	115	Biocomp Intl	136	-1½		
184½	144	Care UK	183½		1.0	19.0
88½	38½	Cotsas	32½			
520	389½	Community Hl	517		2.9	18.8
33	26½	CrestaCare†	31½		3.9	15.0
18	7½	Enviromed	15			
164½	122½	Ferrants Group	143½	+1	3.0	12.4
169½	144½	Gyrus	159½			
179½	141	Healthgh Tec	179½	+14	2.2	
138½	97½	Innovative Tech	104½	-6		
95	68	Intercare Gp†	81½		5.3	45.1
580	495	Isotron†	530		1.5	19.0
201	150	Lon Intl	199		1.7	26.7
257½	190½	Nestor Hlthm	254½		1.9	27.3
2750	2050	Nycomed Amsht	2125	-53	1.1	23.6
5½	5½	Premier Health#	5½			
11	6½	Regina	9			
385½	256½	Scholl†	385	+1	2.8	21.2
633½	501½	Seton Health	633½	+6	1.8	24.8
810	507½	Shield Diag	582½	+7½		
230	190	Sinclair Mont	198½	-3	0.1	
194	150	Smith & Neph	171½	-1½	3.7	15.5
2½	2	Tamaris	2½		4.6	15.5
412½	362½	West Hlthcare	401		2.1	18.2

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
152½	132½	Airsprung	133½		6.0	8.6
196	165½	Albrt	188½		4.1	10.7
85	55	Albion	65		6.3	6.8
140½	120½	Alexandra W	136	+½	6.0	12.8
187½	124	Allied Textile	152½		6.9	10.0
18	13½	Amport	15½		5.7	40.4
205	157	BLP Group†	169	-1	5.5	8.1
285½	206	Baird (Wm)	263	-1	5.0	13.2
53½	50	Bilston Batsea	52½		3.6	27.2
149½	97½	Black Arrow	119	+½	4.5	9.8
421½	391½	Black (Peter)†	401½	+5	2.0	18.7
94½	76	British Mohair†	82½		6.1	71.1
88½	47½	Claremont Garments	55		11.4	
100	81½	Coats Viyella	94½	-1	5.0	33.5
182½	146	Cornwell Prk Srt	155½	-1	2.7	12.5
368	313	Courtaulds Text†	320		6.0	12.2
33½	25½	Creighton	27½			
13½	6½	Dafyman	6½		13.3	
68½	48	Dawson†	56		8.0	8.1
157½	127½	Denby Group	127½		4.5	9.4
267½	225½	Dewhirst†	231½	-½	2.9	14.0
25½	17	Dinted Heft	25½		7.8	
27	13½	Drummond Group	13½	-2½	4.6	3.6
122½	105½	Eclipse Blinds†	105½		4.3	
42	29	Elbief	31		4.8	6.5
131½	90	FII Group	90		5.6	6.9
34	24	Faupel Trading	25		10.5	5.3
10½	4	Foster (J)	4	-½		
44½	37½	French	37½		5.2	
502½	377½	Gaskell	460	-2½	2.3	8.8
78½	60	Haggas (J)	62½		9.8	12.2
11½	8½	Hartstone Group	10½		5.6	28.6
257½	216½	Hicking Pentecost	216½		4.4	12.2
4	2½	Hollas Group	3½			
18½	10½	Honeysuckle Grp#	14			
84	62½	Horace Small	81			
367½	260	IMP Ind	367½		1.7	16.4
25½	12½	Jacques Vert	12½			
52½	37½	Jerome Grp	45		9.9	
320	290	Jones Stroud	290		4.8	12.3
66½	47½	Jourdan (T)†	66½	+1	2.8	
134	80	Kenwood App	98	+5½		
245	200	Lambert Howarth	212½		5.0	9.4
152	135	Lamont Hldgs	137		12.5	9.0
133	90	Leeds Group	90		9.7	5.7
17	8½	Lister Wool	16	-½	11.7	
16	12½	Lionheart	15½		3.3	13.3
90	68	Lyles (S)	85	+½	3.7	8.5
210	173	McBride†	197½	-1½	4.5	14.4
122½	103½	Mayborn†	118½		8.4	8.4
575	550	Osborne & Little	570		4.6	11.3
4½	2½	PEX Group▲	3½	-½	2.9	
126	52½	Parkland Group	53½		9.8	
475	435	Paterson Zoch	463½		4.7	10.3
425	375	Paterson Zch 'A'†	418		5.2	9.3
129	109½	Pentland Group	125		3.7	17.5
210	185	Pifco	205		4.0	10.4
203	185	Pifco 'A' Vtg†	192		4.2	9.7
60½	45	Praedo	45½	+½	9.6	10.1
43½	38	Readicut Intl	41½		7.8	12.2
1300	852	**Reckitt Colman†**	1300	+22	1.8	32.2
595	430½	Relyon	585	+9	3.1	18.9
36	25½	Richards	36½		9.4	
214½	174½	Royal Doulton†	202½	-2	6.2	
32½	20½	SEET	27½	-1		
45½	29½	Sherwood Group†	40	-½	11.2	10.7
110½	83½	Shiloh	101½	-1	4.9	7.1
285	256	Smallshaw	261½		4.8	11.6
70½	52½	Smart	68½	+½	10.1	8.7
41½	32½	Stirling Group	37½		7.8	8.8
16½	7	Stoddard	9		10.4	19.7
252½	191½	Stoves	196½		3.8	12.9
278½	211½	Swallowfield†	260	-2½	3.8	12.4
206½	155	Tomkinsons	188½		7.6	10.2
9½	2½	UK Safety	3			
142	134	Ulster (P)	135½		10.1	7.0
80	68	Victoria	68		4.6	10.8
150	117½	Vymural	145		4.7	10.2
62½	40	Walker Greenbk	59½		8.1	
102½	80	Wyford Widgwd†	102		1.6	28.7
67½	59½	Wensum	60	-1½	10.4	5.2
195	195	Wood (Arthur)†	195		4.5	12.9
140	89½	Yorkyde	92½		6.9	

INSURANCE

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
4100	3250	Ass Gen	4084½	-16½	2.2	
135	108	Angerstein	135	+3	9.7	10.5
64½	53½	Bradstock	61½		11.6	8.2
1364	1102½	Britannic	1264	-9½	3.3	8.5
164	139	CLM Insco	164		8.4	12.9
275½	262½	Charles Taylor†	271½		3.1	30.4
1300	707	Cox Unibrt	1070	-50	3.0	20.8
375½	237	Cox Insce	373½	+3	1.0	27.7
550	495	Dom & Genl	545		2.3	20.0
159	112	Euclidian	147		12.8	18.2
451½	303	FBD IC	451½	-5½	2.1	
162	146½	Finsbury Underw#	161½		10.1	12.9
1626	897	**Gen Accident**	1387	-40	3.4	9.4
495	325	**GRE†**	407	-11	2.6	6.2
721	441½	Hoeman IC	721	+1½	1.4	14.0
206	183	Hiscox	184		2.1	31.3
156	143	Hiscox Select	155		2.3	14.3
1800	1145	Independent	1665		1.2	16.5
602½	342½	Irish Life†	584	-4½	2.3	
187	151½	Jardine Lyd Thi	179½		7.1	11.8
142½	107	Kiln Capital	138		2.5	46.5
116½	100½	Lamport Fen	113½	+5	9.3	8.0
785	532	**Legal & Genl**	670	-16	2.4	17.0
2278½	1421½	Liberty Life†	2175	-46½	1.7	30.1
184½	145	Lmd	173	-½	4.5	10.5
541½	499½	Londn & Manc	541½	+1	5.7	22.3
5596½	4321½	Marsh McLn	5484½	-90½	2.5	
113	100	Mactheson	110½	+5	4.5	
87	79	New London Cap	80½		3.3	
558	385	**Norwich Union†**	449½	-13	9.3	11.8
135	102½	Ockham	123½		3.2	17.8
					2.7	
110½	81½	Onel	91	-6½	7.9	53.8
135	117	Premium Trust	133½	+½	3.7	27.2
1000	720	**Prudential**	790	-22	2.4	18.6
30½	17½	PWS	20		4.7	4.4
825	580	**Royal & Sun All**	700	-17	3.3	17.7
302½	167½	St James Place†	231	+1	0.8	34.2
169½	132	Sedgwick	152	-1½	4.8	12.0
29	22½	Steel Burrill	26		7.2	
645	434½	**Sun Life & Pr**	578	-13	2.5	33.5
136	110	Syndicate Cap	135	+2	8.6	10.8
825	521½	Utd Assurance	584	-8½	4.6	13.4
169½	147½	Wellington	158½		3.6	10.9
173½	128½	Willis Corroon	168½		5.0	13.4
18	11½	Windsor	14½		5.2	

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
610	490	3i	595	-6	2.0	34.2
85	51½	Aberdeen Emg Ec	83	-½		
123½	98½	Aberdeen High Inc	122½	+1½	7.3	17.9
133	84	Abrdn New Dawn	114		1.8	46.2
237	206½	Aberforth Smlr	229	-2½	3.8	25.5
139½	116	Aberforth Sm Wts	137½	-1		
3022½	2466	Alliance†	2957½	-5	1.5	45.3
700½	584	Anglo & O'seas†	683	-7½	1.9	61.4
74½	67½	Aust Opps	68½		0.5	
67	50½	Baillie Gifford SN	57½	+½		
289½	239½	Bankers	277	-3	2.5	44.9
113	85½	Baring Em Eu	113	+1		
607½	468½	Baring Tribune	602	-½	1.7	66.6
140½	114½	Br Assets	135½	-1½	4.5	25.3
122	106	Br Empire Sec	118½		1.1	64.3
61½	52½	Brazilian	60½			
375½	313	Brunner	375		2.2	58.8
116	110	BZW Conv▲	110		8.9	
90½	74½	Cairngorm Dem†	82		1.4	
987½	737½	Candover†	860	+3½	2.9	35.3
88½	58½	Central Euro Gwth	64½	+1		
483½	364	Chart European	477	-2	1.6	
190	168	City Merch HY†	189½	+½	6.1	15.5
281	230	City Of Lon†	271½	-1	3.1	37.5
366½	234	Contl Asset	365	-1	0.7	
77½	74½	Daran Inv Inc	75½		13.7	9.7
635	530	Derby Cap	612½	-5		
139½	127½	Derby Inc	130		18.8	4.0
220½	174½	Dunedin Inc G	214	+½	3.5	33.8
410½	335½	Dunedn Smlr	409	-½	3.1	34.7
218½	170	Dunedn Wwde	216½	-1½	1.2	
292½	245	EMC#	276½		0.2	
60½	43	Edin Dragon	53½	+½		
29½	24½	Edinburgh Inca	28½			
519	413½	Edinburgh IT	495	-4	2.8	39.4
105	81½	Edin Japan	90½	+1½		
519½	424½	Edin US Trkt	514½		0.9	
618	527	Electra Inv	616½	+1	2.0	43.5
187	157	Eng & Scot	181½		2.4	39.3
29½	25½	Ent Cap	27			
520	374	European Asset†	516	-2½	0.9	
78½	47½	Fidelity Asian Val	63½	-½		
359	277½	Fidelity Euro Valt	354		0.2	
32½	25	Fidelity Jap Val	31	+½		
158	135½	Fidelity Spec Val	153		1.1	76.4
250½	217½	Finsbury 'A'	247½		2.0	87.4
223	173	Finsbury Gwth	205½		2.1	57.6
156½	130	Five Arr Chile	141½	-½	1.7	73.7
18½	2½	Five Arr Wts	3½			
642½	513½	Fleming Amer	631	-2	0.4	
64	44½	Fleming Asian	55½			
12½	6½	Fleming Asian Wts	9½	-½		
64½	44½	Fleming Chinese	53½	-½		
27½	14	Fleming Ch Wts	18½	-½		
507½	401½	Fleming Claver	483		1.8	66.8
652½	471	Fleming Cont	636		0.8	
134	100½	Fleming Em Mkts	132	-1½	0.4	
352	271	Fleming Emp	336½		2.0	50.1
411	307	Flem Grd Gth Ord	403	-½	0.9	
162½	152	Flem Grd Gth Pf	162½	+½	10.0	
132½	103	Fleming Inc Cap	130½	-½	5.5	24.8
111½	105½	Fleming Ing Inc	109		11.4	10.1
350½	246½	Fleming Ing Cap	340	-2½		
50½	39½	Fleming Indian	48½	-1½		
12½	8½	Fleming In Wts	11½	-½		
167½	131	Fleming Japan	143½	+3		
439	364½	Fleming Merct	426½	+1½	2.9	
85½	70½	Fleming Nat Rest	85½	+1	0.3	
413½	350½	Fleming Oseas	409½	-½	1.4	
184½	148½	Fleming Smllr Co	184	+½	3.1	53.5
491½	371½	Fleming US Discvt	488½	-½	0.3	
203½	168	Foreign & Col†	195½	-1	1.4	68.4
123½	97	F&C Inc Gwth	117	-½	3.8	32.5
107½	93½	F&C Emg Mkts	100½	-½		
266½	185	F&C Enterprise	263½	+1	1.9	57.0
499½	361½	F&C Eurotst	486	-6½	0.3	
223½	150½	F&C German	220½	-2½	0.3	
131	99½	F&C Pacific	112	-½	2.1	
178½	144½	F&C PEP	178		3.2	38.9
208½	177	F&C Smaller	208½	-½	1.6	60.4
179	144½	F&C US Smlr	173½	-2½		
64½	60½	Franklin Inc	64½		10.0	
158	109½	Franklin Cap	156½	-½		
276	133½	Fraus Dual Cp	262½	-8½		
59	38½	Fulcrum Cap	59			
22½	17	Fulcrum Inc	17½		84.6	1.9
192½	188	Fulcrum Zero	192½			
325	270½	Gartmore Brit	323½		3.5	
333½	242½	Gartmore Euro	328½	-2½	0.5	
155	110	Gartmore Shrd	154½	-½	7.6	16.0
441½	345½	G'more Smlr Cost	441	+1½	1.7	65.1
79½	52½	Geared Inc Dvd	79½	+½	7.7	10.2
58½	51½	Geared Inc Inc	57½		10.7	7.4
103	59½	Gov Asn Sm Cost	94½		0.7	
92½	70½	Gov Emg Mkts	92½	+½	0.5	
213½	151½	Govett Am Smlr	208	-2½		
97½	81½	Govett High Inc	96	+½	7.3	16.5
108½	80½	Govett Oriental	98½	+½	0.9	
465	379½	Govett Strategic	456½	+1	2.1	42.9
31½	19½	Gresham House	27½		1.1	1.6
146½	119	GT Inc Growth	144½	-½	2.9	49.7
180½	136½	GT Japan	148	+1½	0.3	
156½	114½	Gsm Fl Ex Inc	155½		6.7	
76	61	Henderson Am Cp	71½	-½		
120½	116½	Henderson Am In	118		8.4	
43½	29	Henderson Am Wt	40½	-2		
350½	281½	Hend Elec Gen	339		1.4	78.8
132½	101	Hend Far East	126		8.0	15.1
580	452	Hend Gmnar	570		1.7	71.5
172	151½	Hend High Inct	162	-1	5.2	22.1
42½	30½	Hend Jap Smlr	37½	+½		
278	219	Hend Smlr	276½	-1	1.8	66.6
620½	485	Hend Strata	604	-2½	0.1	
69½	51	Hend TR Pac	57½		0.5	
117½	88½	Hend Tech	112½	-2½		
187	135½	Herald†	187		0.6	
124½	105½	High Income T	121½	-½	7.0	15.3
162	140	H Govett Smlr	161	-½	2.3	57.1
176½	139½	I&S UK Smlr	176½		2.1	70.6
213½	180	Inv Cap	204	-1	3.5	30.8
97	66½	Intl Biotech	66½	-2		
20	7½	Intl Biotec Wts	8½			
82	70	Intl Biotec C	82			
59½	38	INVESCO Asia	51½		1.6	62.9
210½	175½	INVESCO Eng Intl	204½	-3	0.8	
36½	25½	INVESCO Jap Dis	30	+1		
49½	30	INVESCO Korea	35	-½		
33½	23½	INVESCO Tokyo	27	+½		
107½	83½	JF Fledg Jap	92	+1		
204½	135	J Fry Euro U	203½	-½	3.4	
113½	85½	J Fry Util	112½		5.2	13.5
88½	79½	J Fry Utl Inc	87		8.0	63.1
150	121½	Jupiter Ex Inc	149½	-½	6.6	18.9
43½	19½	Jupiter Ex Incwt	42	-1		
105	91	Jupiter Grd Cap	104½	-½	9.6	12.9
50	44	Jupiter Grd Pld	49½	-½		
152½	135½	Jupiter Intl Grwt	152		3.4	
104	73½	Kiwi E Mkt	102	-1		
177½	164½	Kiwi End	176			
156	118	Kiwi H Inc	154	-½	9.4	15.6
223½	170½	Kiwi Smlr	218½	-1	1.5	
201½	89	Korea-Euro	145½	-33½	0.8	67.4
132	113	Latin American	127½	-½		
1270½	1077½	Law Debenture†	1235	-5	2.9	34.3
120	113½	Lile Oil Opp	114			
153½	124½	Lloyds Sm Cap	152½	-½		
22	17½	Lloyds Sm Dwt	18½		29.4	4.3
170	143	Lloyds Sm Pfgt	169		3.2	
211½	173½	Lon St Lawrence†	211½		3.8	32.8
414½	341½	Lowland	404½	-½	3.8	34.6
812½	797½	M&G 2nd Dual Cp#	800			
51½	50	M&G 2nd Dual Inc#	50		1.6	
89½	79½	M&G Inc Geared	93		7.6	11.7
75½	54	M&G Inc Inv Tst Cp	75			
26½	22½	M&G Inc Inv Tst Inc	24		4.0	
182½	150½	M&G Inc Package	182		4.1	32.6
80½	77½	M&G Inc Zero Div	80	+½		
69	31	M&G Rec Cap	69	+½		
93½	53½	M&G Rec Geared	93		7.3	17.9
26½	22½	M&G Rec Inc	25½		26.5	4.9
198½	160	M&G Rec Pacge	198½	+½	3.4	38.1
112½	108½	M&G Rec Zero Div	112½			
216	160½	M Curie Euro	209½	-2½	0.5	
84½	64½	M Curie Japan	73½	+1		
125½	100½	M Curie Pac	112		2.2	
358	292½	Majedie	356½	-½	2.4	54.2
432	355	Merchants†	424½	-2½	4.2	38.5
166½	132	Mercury Euro Pv	165	-½	1.7	47.5
75½	50½	Mercury Em Wt	84½			
74½	57½	Mercury Worldt	74½	+½	1.4	
1		Mercury Wld Wts				
809	677½	Monks Inv Tst	797½	-4½	1.5	64.6
202	180	Morg Gren Inc	190	-3	4.5	26.6
97½	80½	Morg Wts	94½			
82	70	Morg Latn Amer	74	-½	0.7	
32½	22½	Morg Wts	28½	-½		
130½	110½	Murray Ent	129		3.0	44.2
22½	10	Murray Ent Wts	22			
71	53½	Murray Emg Eco	70½	-½	1.0	
11½	7½	Murray Em Ec Wt	9½			
529½	448	Murray Income	524½	-1½	3.5	37.5
494½	431½	Murray Intl†	482	-2½	3.8	31.9
210½	205½	Murray S/C DP	210½			
395	270	Murray S/C Cap	382½	-2½		
64½	58½	Murray S/C Inc	59		25.7	4.7
5150	4350	Murray S/C Uts	5125		3.0	
428½	340	Murray Small	425½	-1½	1.8	54.8
405½	379½	Murray Vent	385		4.9	23.0
289	271½	Natwest Ent	286		2.2	44.1
5½	2½	Newmarket	2½			
56½	34½	Pacific Assets†	46½		1.1	
121½	83	Perpetual Euro	119½	-1½	0.5	
156½	125	Perp Inc Gth	144	-2	3.4	43.1
37	27½	Perpetual Jap	31½	+½		
377½	322½	Perpl Uk Sm Cot	376½	-1	2.3	48.1
£200½	£168	Personal Assets	£200	+100	1.5	
148½	130½	Prolific Inct	147		3.6	31.5
354	270	Rit Cap Ptnr	345½	-5	0.7	
545½	516½	Robeco	538½	+½	2.0	
553	524	Rolinco	543½	+½	0.8	
59½	37½	Scottd Asia Pac	51½	+½	1.2	
73	56½	Schrod Emg Cm	70½	-½		
165½	142	Schrod Inc Gwthf	160	-2	3.7	29.8
61½	48	Schrod Jap Gwth	54½	+½		
282½	152	Schrod Korea	202½	-30½		
81½	43½	Schrod Split Cap	76	-1½		
135	114½	Schrod Split Inc	130	+½	8.4	
180	154½	Schrod Split Zero	155	-½		
174½	143	Schrod UK Gwth	167	-1	3.6	45.2
182½	165½	Schrod Vent Intl	182		1.2	
379½	311	Scot	373		2.1	59.3
233	183½	Scot American	227	-2½	3.0	39.3
144½	91½	Scot Asian	132½	-½		
134½	110½	Scot Eastern†	131½	-1	1.9	51.3
390	316½	Scot Mige	384½	-3½	1.8	
104	100½	Scot Natl Tst	103½		10.1	10.8
140½	119½	Scot Value	134	-1	1.9	28.1
3658½	2168½	Secd Allnce	2600	-15	2.6	48.7
131½	112½	Secs Tst of Scot	128½	-1	3.6	35.8
188	149½	Shires Smlr	186½	+½	4.2	29.2
184½	133½	Smaller Cost	161		2.6	
385	353	St Andrew Intt	376½		3.3	36.8
602	484	Temple Bar	578½	-7½	4.2	29.4
97	80	Throgmorton	96½	-½	3.1	42.5
128½	102½	Trlton Emg Mkt	123½	-½	1.1	72.2
234½	167½	TR Euro Growth	231½	-2½	0.5	
48½	44½	TR Property	48½		2.7	33.9
412½	374	TR Tech Inv#	400		11.9	32.0
364	272	Turkey Inct	353½	-10	1.3	
158½	146½	Undervalued Ast	151	-½	11.9	66.8
167½	152	Value Inc Tst	163½		3.6	34.0
132½	102½	Value Real	130½		0.8	65.5
53½	40½	Warrants & Val	53½			
103½	87½	Wigmore	100½	-½	1.0	
385½	310½	Witan	374	-1	2.3	46.2
74½	66½	Yeoman Inc	69		4.1	4.4

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LEISURE & HOTELS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
29½	11	ABI Leis#	13½		15.1	
512½	405½	Airtours	506	+4½	1.6	25.4
30½	23½	Ald Leisr	30		4.2	9.5
21	16	Arena Leis	19½	+½		
155	120	BS Group	121	-2½	5.3	
130	110	Baldwin†	125		4.0	10.2
120	82	Bluebird Toys	111		10.8	
800	667½	Boosey Hwks	775		1.6	
33½	27½	Burndene	31		8.3	7.9
159½	95	Capital Corpn	110½	+2	6.0	
83½	55	Clevedon	80½	+½	3.1	18.3
109½	70½	Clubhaus	91½			24.3
295	223	Eurocamp	292½	+2½	5.4	12.3
104	67	Euro Disney	96½	-3		
138½	120½	Euro Leisuret	134½		3.9	8.5
173½	100	First Choice	159½	-½	2.2	55.5
367½	269½	First Leisure	365½		3.1	20.8
145½	110½	Friendly Hotelst	139½	-½	5.3	
1172	837	**Granada**	1045	+1	1.7	21.5
47½	36½	Hi-Tec Sports	38½		6.5	7.4
289	207½	Holmes Placet	267½		1.4	
282½	165½	Hornby	218½		3.7	10.6
370	310	Horizon	332½		4.2	17.7
183½	148	Jarvis Hotels	165½		3.4	10.6
526½	351½	Jurys Hotel	522½	+1	1.6	25.1
35	24½	Kunick	29½	+½	3.2	15.3
370	250	**Ladbroke**	342		2.6	25.0
328½	163½	London Clubs	200	-3½	5.2	14.4
242½	182½	Macdonald Hts	230		2.5	17.3
161½	125½	Man Utd	125½	-1	1.6	30.1
59½	34½	Mandarin Ornt	42½	-½	4.8	
573½	418½	Millennium & Cop	573½	+3½	1.9	22.1
1½	1	Mulhall Hldgs	1			
102½	77½	Newcastle Utd†	93½	+1½	2.1	10.1
600	400½	Northern	549		1.8	33.3
74½	54½	Prism Leisure	55		15.5	3.7
25½	19½	Queensborough	22		2.3	8.4
29½	12½	Queens Moat	27½			6.1
421	283½	**Rank Grp†**	378	-6½	6.0	14.7
49	38½	Regal Hotels	43		3.6	
77½	50½	Ryan Hotels E	76½	+3½	2.8	16.0
1900	1175	Savoy Hotel 'A'†	1557½		1.7	25.5
51½	31½	Sheffield United	32			
252½	232½	Sinclair (Wm)†	241½		4.7	11.7
80	63½	Southampton	71		1.8	
134	91	Stakis	133	+1	2.3	20.3
276	250½	Stanley Leisure	260		2.0	18.3
10	4	Tandem	7½			
346	346	Tanjong#	346		1.2	
194	157	Thistle Hotelst	173½		3.0	14.2
76½	59½	Tobermn Hotel	67½		1.9	17.9
301½	135½	Vardont	173½		1.7	21.0
385	302½	Wembleyt	382½		1.0	9.5
158½	120	Zenex Gp	130		18.1	7.6

MEDIA

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
495	324	Abbott Mead†	378½		2.1	17.9
175½	145½	Adscene	171½		6.2	17.9
87½	64½	Aegis Gp	82½	+1½	0.9	22.6
154	70	Aspen Grp	110	+15	2.8	
195	152½	Atlantic Telecom	180½	-1		
79½	50½	BBB Design	67½			
225	185	Barrett Indev	192½	+1½	6.6	22.0
3½	1½	Birkdale	2½			
390	320	Black (A&C)	387½		4.6	
370½	267½	Border TV	348½	+1	2.5	26.7
470	410	Bristol	470	+½	4.3	16.1
268½	129½	Bull Allcroft	254	-5½	0.9	36.6
594	213	**BSkyB†**	434	+½	1.7	26.3
236½	163½	CIA Gp	236½	+5½	1.5	
747½	497	Capital Radio	667½	-2½	2.6	28.7
561	408	**Carlton Comms**	478	-17	3.2	13.7
307½	145	Character Grp	293½	-1½	1.9	19.5
742½	602½	Chrysalis	722½		0.5	
87½	77	City of Lon	86		9.0	11.1
137	88	Cordiant Comms	119½	-½	1.0	
178½	143½	Creative Pub	177½		4.9	62.9
2500	2084½	Daily Mail	2481½		1.2	29.0
2516¾	2000	Daily Mail 'A'	2506¾	-12½	1.1	29.2
209½	129½	Dialog	180½	-2½		
247	203	Dorling Kndt	231	-3	2.4	62.9
415	265½	Dudley Jenkins	380	+1½	1.7	27.2
1296	905	**EMAP**	1286	+22½	1.3	30.2
685	420	**EMI**	429½	-9½	3.4	67.7
1117½	943½	Elsevier	950½	+7½	2.7	75.3
2247½	1495	Euromoney Pb	2000		3.3	22.0
67	50½	Finch†	66½		1.3	11.2
555	481	Flextech	560½	+2		
206½	117½	GGT Group	201		4.0	30.9
192½	155½	GWR Gp	162½		1.9	34.6
395	244	Gearhouse Group	247½		3.5	12.4
48½	34½	Goodhead	43		1.5	14.1
435	290	HIT Enter	402½		0.3	74.1
287½	262½	Haynes Publ	282½		5.0	11.8
13½	9½	Highbury Hse	11½			
245	204	Hodder Hline†	241		3.7	15.3
580	400	Home Counties	560		1.3	
490	365	IBC	486		2.7	
81½	70½	ITE Group	81	+3½		
23½	18½	Incepta	20½			12.4
397½	327½	Independent†	357½		2.2	
162	122	Interclusept	129½		4.8	9.9
235½	196½	Johnston Press	225		1.7	17.2
353½	328	LLP Group	333½		1.5	22.2
48	30	Lopex†	44½		2.8	9.5
461	305	Maiden†	451	+22½	1.6	
38½	23½	Mediakeyt	31½		5.4	11.9
1175	940	Metal Bulletn	1125		2.5	23.4
213½	170	Miror Grp	186	-2½	3.4	11.9
1190	713	More Grp	1117½	-2½	1.8	23.6
435½	333	News Corp	412½	-6½	2.3	13.3
377	292½	News Corp Pref	353	-9	6.9	
308½	252½	Newsquest	301		2.2	19.5
15½	11½	Osprey Comms	13			
1013	705	**Pearson†**	955	+9	2.5	27.4
55½	34½	Phonelink	38			
922½	867½	Portsmth Sund	922½		2.0	19.3
78½	51½	Quarto	77	-½	7.2	10.6
730	575	**Reed Intl**	657½	-3½	2.1	
745	509½	**Reuters†**	662		2.5	
173½	100½	Saatchi	162½		2.5	
748½	651	Scot Medt	724	-1	3.9	21.1
462	375	Scot Radio	452		2.5	20.1
54½	40½	Shandwick	45½		4.2	10.7
13½	6½	Sleepy Kids	7½		1.1	
550	448	Southnews	544	-1	2.0	18.7
22½	17½	Sterling Pub	19½			4.4
114½	85½	Taylor Nelson	109	+½	1.2	
230	204	Televesta Cot	228		2.0	16.3
1920	1549½	Thomson Corp	1760½	-13½	2.4	37.6
573	483½	Trinity Intt	520	-2½	3.2	16.5
245	205	Ulster TV†	213½	+3½	5.3	
831	630	**United Newst**	654	-19	3.9	17.5
119½	84½	VCI	92½		10.7	2.8
107½	75½	VTR	107½		2.5	11.4
395	240	WPP	380½	-5½	0.6	34.1
166½	123½	Wilmington	165	-½	0.5	36.2

MINING

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
3087½	2290½	Ang Am Coal	3087½	+3½	5.3	7.2
3468¾	1975	Ang Am	3234½	+21½	2.6	
3181½	2068½	Ang Am Gold	3181½	+203½	4.9	
971½	643½	Anglo Am Plat	962½		2.7	26.4
3312½	2040½	Anglogold	3312½	+178½	6.3	15.8
22½	14½	Anglo Pac Gp	15½			
31½	22	Arcon Intl	24			
645½	411½	Ashanti	642	-3½	1.9	
66½	47½	Ashton	48½	-½	1.2	
112	47	Avocet	68	+4		
185	133½	**Billiton**	177	+7	3.4	14.7
34½	31½	Blach	33½		3.5	
20½	15	Bougainville	15½			
298½	222½	Central Pacific	227	-2½		
49½	21½	Cons Murchison	47½			1.4
1609¾	1062½	De Beers	1516½	-21½	3.8	8.8
423½	337½	Driefontein	385½		3.2	12.4
189½	88	Durban	160½			
87½	57½	E Rand Gold	77½		21.5	3.3
15	10½	E Rand Prop	12½			21.8
253½	128½	Elandsrand	235½		7.3	
273½	219½	Eng China Clay	244½	+4	6.6	11.4
126½	92	Evander	124½		12.4	
340½	92	FS Cons	326½	+½	11.5	8.7
45	17	FS Dev	45	+9½		
1040¾	734¾	GFSA	1031½			
142½	85½	Gencor	142½		2.6	21.0
136	98½	Gold Fields Prop	124½		2.7	9.2
23½	14½	Greenwich R 'A'	20		6.2	13.5
58½	31½	Gwalia Cons	58½	+½	1.4	10.5
275½	112½	Hartebst	274½		8.6	
712½	443½	Impala Plat	700		2.4	14.0
13½	9½	Kenmare Res	10½			
32	14	Kidston	32	+4½		
11½	7	Meekatharra	7½	+½		
42	29	MIM	41	-1	2.4	
1087½	900	Minorco†	1031½		3.7	
105	65	Mosdedgtt	97		4.9	
73½	53	Normandy	70½	-1½	3.3	15.0
177½	152½	North	170½	+½	3.0	24.0
60	22½	Petaling Tin	32½			57.8
111	64½	RGC	72½	+½	5.4	3.8
142½	80	RJB†	119	+2	2.10	1.5
29½	24½	Randgold	26½		17.0	
155½	77½	Randfontein	146		4.1	15.4
121½	80½	Reunion Mng	80½			
898	641	**Rio Tinto**	893	+28	3.6	16.8
871	666½	Rio Tinto Ltd	871	+11½	3.1	21.2
8½	4	St Barbara	7½	-1½		
197	138	St Helena	166½		19.3	2.4
192½	138½	Sons Gwalia	191½	+1½	5.2	13.6
130½	98½	Silvrn Pacific	98½	-1½		
1175	793½	Southvaal	1140½		10.3	
228½	177½	WMC†	222	-1	2.1	27.8
27	12	Wankie Col Z	14½		7.4	5.2
67½	40½	Water Hall	43½			
443	381½	Watts Blake†	385		5.7	
1563½	975	Western Deep	1496½	+3½	5.4	
149	109½	Zambia Copper	130½	+17½		

OIL & GAS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
212	155½	Abbot Group	202½	+½	1.6	
32½	19½	Alliance Res	22½			
64½	54	Aminex	62	-½		
77	62½	Asc Oil & Gas	62½	-2½		
27½	9½	Aviva Pet	13½			
430	298½	Br Borneo	341½		1.0	
343	265	BG	304½	-½	3.3	38.0
958	708½	**Br Petroleum†**	915	-1½	3.0	20.3
1½	½	Bula Resources	1			
1275	895	Burmah Castrl	1222	-8	3.3	18.0
496½	290½	Cairn Energy	335½	-4½		60.7
119	89	Coastlinet	105½	-2½		
14½	10½	Copiex Res	11			
22½	19½	Dana Pet	21½			
72½	51½	Dragon Oil	56½			
28½	19½	Edin Oil & Gst	21½		7.7	15.8
10	5½	Emerald Energy	5½			
598½	510	**Enterprise†**	534	-10	4.1	27.9
14½	11	Fortune	11			41.4
300½	240	Hardy Oil	249½	-4	0.5	
47½	33½	JKX Oil & Gas	34½	-½		
385	300½	KBC Adv Tech	352		1.2	31.1
300	240	LASMO†	252	-7½	0.9	67.6
42½	35½	Lasmo Unsst	39	-½	21.6	
64½	38	Monument	64½	-½		23.1
3005½	2612½	Norsk Hydro†	2984½	+40½	2.0	
127	87	Oil Search	109½	-1½		
58½	41½	Petrol	44½			
54½	37	Premier†	43½	+2½	1.7	9.3
58	29½	Prosanctt	35½			
417½	331	Ranger	413½	-1½	4.6	7.4
3616¾	3031½	Royal Dtch R	3368½	-12½	2.8	25.7
4878½	3966½	Schlumberger	4734½	-10½	1.0	
495½	385	**Shell**	436½	-2	3.3	24.6
370½	272½	SOCO Intl	272½	-3½		
7569½	5843½	Total	6837½	-96½	1.9	
332½	242½	XCL	247½			

OTHER FINANCIAL

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
134	87½	Aberdeen Asset	127½	-4	3.7	38.4
775	467	**AMVESCAP†**	665	-30	1.1	36.5
199½	120½	BWD	191½		4.9	17.3
55½	44½	Berry Bcn Nbl	44½		8.4	11.0
294	247	Bristec Inv	254	-1		
369½	245½	Brewin Dolphin	354½		3.3	17.2
888	725	Caledonia	877½	-3½	2.7	23.4
4050	2800	Camellia	4000		1.1	16.9
683	398½	Cattles†	676½	-1	1.8	33.8
44½	37½	Christie	40		3.1	12.1
795	525½	Close Bros	782		2.1	22.7
602	433	EFM	598½		5.2	14.4
32½	20	Exco	23		4.1	
37½	19½	Fishers Intl	37½	+1	2.2	20.8
219½	137	Friends Ivory Sime	218½		4.3	
409	332	Gerrard	373½		5.4	16.8
298½	247½	Hambros	285	+1	3.3	27.3
1705	1425	Henderson	1625		3.6	22.4
202½	142½	Hitachi Cred	202½		2.7	18.6
180	145	Investment Co	180		2.4	
177½	136½	Jacome Strat	154½	-2	5.6	
164½	111½	Johnson Fryt	150		3.3	
620	570	Leopold J	592½	+2½	4.2	26.0
615½	462½	Liberty Intl	599½		3.7	26.2
476½	343½	Lon Forfaiting	444	-½	3.5	14.8
217½	169½	London Pacific	200	-½	8.7	
160	110½	Lon Scot Bk	147	-1	2.9	26.0
263½	232½	Man ED & F	246		5.6	9.9
1935	1407½	M & G	1757½	-35	2.8	28.4
224½	182½	Paragon▲	223½		1.5	9.5
4350	2882½	Perpetual	3887½		2.0	26.3
1024	785	Provident	1020	+29	2.5	33.3
617½	400	Rathbone Brst	567½	-2½	3.1	22.7
65½	54½	Rea Brothers†	65½		1.9	13.1
62½	49½	Rolland Tst	60½		3.5	13.7
107½	80	SEC Group	85		7.5	6.6
392	317½	S & U	391		5.9	10.3
3030	1730	**Schroders†**	2955	+3	1.0	33.8
2638	1525	Schroders N/V†	2575	-60	1.1	29.5
775	610	Secure Tst	752½		2.8	
185½	136½	Singer & Fried	176½	+3	3.9	12.5
62½	48½	Town Law	61½			
5½	3½	Trio Hldgs	3½			
81½	61½	Union	66½			
51	45½	Versailles Grp	50½		1.1	30.5
437½	307½	Wintrust	437½		4.1	17.7

PHARMACEUTICALS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
150	42	Brit Biotech	50			
750	600	Cantab Pharms	622½			
332½	272½	Celltech	312½	-7½		
356½	230	Chiroscience	309	-7		
201	65	Core Group	65			
235	162	Cortecs	170½	-2		
1585	1230	**Glaxo Wellc**	1560	-30	2.5	33.9
135	81½	ML Laboratories	87½			
185	140	Medeva†	169	+6	3.3	7.9
280	165	Oxford Molecular	189	-½		
310	265	Peptide Thera	280			
513½	194½	Powderject	467½	-12½		
32½	43½	Proteus Intl	57½	-2		
71	59	Ransom (Wm)	60½		5.3	12.2
187½	124½	Quadrant Health	168½			
332½	260	Scotia	337½	-2½		
449½	285½	Shire Pharms	440			
102½	47½	SkyePharma	79	-2½		
835	612	**SmithKline**	677	-12½	1.7	32.7
225	165	Therm Am Inc	166	-3		
552½	422½	Vanguard	582½	-2½		
182	49½	Vanguard Wts	152½			
245	145	Xenova	161½			
2850	2114	**Zeneca†**	2515	+29	1.9	32.7

PRINTING & PAPER

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
94	83	A1 Holdings	84		9.6	12.1
540	530	API	533	-5	3.4	17.3
117½	68½	Apo Holo	99½	+8		
228	145½	Arjo Wiggins†	208	+2½	3.8	11.2
21	13½	Bern Press	19		3.6	8.0
468½	439½	Bemrose†	451	-½	4.5	
193½	144½	Blagden	177½		2.1	
3371½	2573½	Bowater Inc	3525	+21½		
343½	223½	Bunzl Indt	298½		1.4	
537	435	Br Polythene†	499		5.0	
291	213½	Bunzl	276	+1	2.5	15.5
141½	112½	Cascal Indst	135		5.6	
251½	225½	Cooper (James)	227½		2.6	8.1
395	266½	De La Rue	299	-4½	10.0	7.8
274½	232½	Dolphin Packt	261½		3.9	12.3
100	70	Ferguson Intl	86		6.5	6.5
197½	145½	Filtrona	186		2.6	13.0
85	56½	Inveresk	67½		10.7	10.0
232½	185½	Jarvis Porter	218½		4.3	12.8
381	284	Low & Bonar†	346½	-1½	4.8	11.6
25½	18½	Lowe (Robert)†	23½		2.2	8.5
79½	65½	LIV Holdings	74	+1	4.6	10.0
177½	132½	Macfarlane	161½	+1½	3.5	
335	213½	Photobition	277½	+3½	0.6	46.0
174½	140½	Plysu	172½		5.8	13.1
30½	25	Porter Chadbn	28½		3.8	8.5
299½	229	REXAM†	266	+1	7.2	10.8
532½	500	St Ives Gp	511	-½	2.8	15.2
365½	227½	Sappi	356½	-5	2.3	
68½	29	Security & General	53½			
122½	92½	Sidlaw	110½		2.5	30.4
233½	165½	Smith David	210½	+3½	4.8	13.7
211½	156	Smurfit (Jeff)	209		2.1	
168	105	Sonic	113	-1	3.5	12.4
146	133½	Tinsley Robor	143		3.6	15.9
43½	16	Vitace	38	+2½		
285½	247½	Waddington	269½		5.0	11.9
347½	288	Watmough	347		3.8	17.8
287½	223	Wyndeham	284½	-½	2.4	17.3

PROPERTY

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
116½	91	Allied Lon	114½		4.5	8.2
195	155½	Asda	180½		2.1	23.6
34½	28½	Ashquay Gp	32½	-1		
172½	135½	Ashtenne Hldgs	172½		3.7	
278½	243½	Benchmark	269½	-½	2.2	38.1
288½	252½	Bilton	271½		5.1	19.8
173½	149	Birkby	157½		6.9	10.5
5½	3	Bolton Gp	3½			
64	53½	Bourne End	61½		2.5	
322½	276½	Bradford	322½		3.4	22.5
825	645	**Br Land**	757	-18	1.4	43.3
255	213	Brixton	246½		4.7	30.0
132	100	Burford	126		2.3	
147	132	CLS Hldgst	142½		5.0	
318½	246½	Cap & Regnl▼	285		1.5	27.8
460	407½	Cap Shop Cost	445	-1	2.6	29.1
328½	263½	Cardiff Prop	328½	+2	1.2	30.1
14½	9½	Carlisle	14			57.8
13½	8½	Cathay Intl	9½			
418½	343½	Chelsfield	370		1.1	43.4
634	590	Chesterfield	634	+1	2.6	
37	29	Chesterton Intl#	35			
53½	34½	City Site Estt	36			28.8
107	90	Cleveland Tst	95½	-½	8.0	11.9
95½	82½	CNC Props	91½	+2	4.8	
244½	185½	Compco	243½		2.2	30.3
1685	1605	Daejan	1685		3.0	16.1
21	15½	Dares Estates	17½	-½		10.6
128½	95½	Debenhm Twsn	112½		3.1	13.2
89½	69½	Delancey Ests	87½	-2	2.2	17.9
224½	192½	Dencora	224½	+1	2.8	
598	552½	Derwent Hldgs	596½		1.4	40.9
356	283½	Development Sec	343½	+7	1.0	21.2
205½	172½	Edge Properties	205	+2½		21.9
430	410	Estates Agency†	430	+10	5.4	19.5
85	75½	Estates Genl	75½		1.3	19.5
158½	139½	Evans Of Leeds	157½		2.8	18.4
42½	36½	Fletcher King	40		6.2	13.2
68½	61½	Folkes Group	68½	+1½	3.9	
68	57½	Folkes Group nv	67	+½	4.0	
540	461	Frogmore†	532½		4.7	13.9
19	14½	Golden Land Inv	15½			
370	322	Grainger	364		2.6	
296	237½	Gr Portland	275½	-1½	4.1	30.3
196½	159	Grantchester	188		0.7	56.5
228½	214½	Greycoat	216		0.9	28.3
147½	104½	Hambro Cntryt	139½		2.7	9.0
537½	465½	Hammerson†	524		2.8	30.9
33½	25½	Hampton Trust	28½			
608	555	Helical Bar	605		2.1	16.6
50	46½	Hemingway	48½	-½	1.5	16.0
130½	69½	HK Land†	86½	-1½	8.3	
325	200	Jermyn▼	320	-1	2.3	79.7
134½	94	LSH	128½	-1½	1.6	9.3
95½	84½	Lands Impt	85½		6.9	
1190	937½	**Land Secs**	1054	+5	3.2	30.3
39½	31	Lon & Assoc	35½		3.3	
15	9½	Lon & Metro	14			1.0
137½	118½	Lon Merch Sec	136½		4.5	12.6
624	509½	**MEPC**	624	+9	3.4	28.3
119½	98½	MWB Group	112	+½	4.2	
150	132	McKay Secs	149		3.7	21.0
89½	65½	Merivale Mre	84½		3.3	7.6
353	270	Milner Est	350	+1	2.5	16.8
229½	202½	Minerva	226½	+2	0.9	
35	25	Moorfield Est†	34½		2.0	
1900	1681½	Mountview	1793½	+93½	2.9	12.6
169	156½	Muckow (A&J)	158	-2	5.8	17.2
35	31	OEM	33½			1.8
74½	52½	ORB	66½			29.0
38½	31½	Olives Prop	32		2.4	
702½	635	Peel	700		1.5	
325½	277	Pillar Prop	321½		2.0	46.7
13½	7½	Premier Land	9			
204½	189	Quintain	196		2.2	32.7
28½	24	Raglan	25½		5.9	10.0
35½	26	Regalian	32½		4.1	16.1
202½	157½	Rugby Est	185½	-7	1.8	
81½	67½	St Modwen Prpt	78	-½	4.8	9.5
73	59	Savills Gtde	71	-½	5.3	28.9
143	111½	Savills	129	-½	3.6	9.0
102½	92	Scot Met	102½	+½	3.8	18.0
232	217	Shaftesbury	228		1.2	52.9
414½	342½	Slough Estates	390½	+1	2.6	26.6
262½	242½	Smart (J)	257½	+5	4.8	9.6
100½	93	TBI	97½	+½	2.6	31.9
195½	176½	Tops Ests	178½		1.8	38.6
118	102	Town Centre	115		4.3	14.3
162½	149½	Trafford Park	162		3.1	17.7
103½	87½	UK Land	100		3.8	13.8
278½	251½	Warner	268½	-1	6.0	18.8
260	256	Warnford	260		3.7	16.4
110½	94½	Wates▲	95½			44.1
450½	345½	Workspace Grp	346½		4.3	16.4

RETAILERS, FOOD

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
227½	173	**ASDA Group**	192½	-2½	2.0	18.1
73½	56	Budgen	72½	+3	2.5	14.8
80½	55½	Dairy Farm Intl	79½	-½	4.5	
212½	157	Farepak	160		4.0	11.5
40½	37½	Fitzwilton	37½		7.6	10.3
152	95	Fyffes	152	+2	1.4	17.8
2512½	1995	Greggs†	2412½		1.9	19.9
231	119	Iceland Group†	230		2.9	18.0
421½	382	Kwik Save	408½	-2½	6.1	14.7
271½	227½	Morrison (W)†	263	-6½	1.0	21.1
50½	38	Park Foods	49½	-½	7.5	14.4
402	330	**Safeway**	353½	-1	5.0	12.7
567	370	**Sainsbury J**	472½	-7	3.3	19.2
365½	207½	Somerfield	338½	-9	3.9	11.6
280½	194½	T & S Stores	276½		3.9	
620	485	**Tesco**	553	-10	2.7	23.2
293½	256½	Thorntons†	278		2.7	22.0
590	505	Watson& Philip	575		4.1	16.0

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
393½	335½	Alexon	335½			9.7
206	194	Allders	194½	-2½	5.1	8.5
180	134½	Allied Carpets†	138		7.1	10.6
508	361½	Arcadia	417½	-13½	0.4	16.9
683	390	Argos	645	+37	3.6	20.5
41½	19½	Ashley (Laura)	30½			
191½	164½	Austin Reed	186	+9	5.2	
337½	300½	Beale	303½	+2	3.9	10.4
193½	157	Beattie (J)	192½	+3½	6.5	
155½	119½	Bentalls	156½	+1	3.2	
438½	336½	Blacks Leis	363½	-12	1.5	13.1
146	109	Body Shop	116½	-1	5.4	12.3
990	602	**Boots†**	937	+15	2.8	21.6
52½	30½	Brown & Jackson	46½	-½		12.5
460	369	Brown (N)	376	-1	2.3	20.8
505	365	Carpetright	359½	-½	7.3	11.9
385	227	Christies Intl	250	-3	2.7	19.4
432½	338	Church†	405		5.2	
135½	95½	Clinton Cards	135	-½	2.8	
272½	189½	Country Gens	235½		1.0	17.0
432½	332½	Courts Furnish	377½		1.3	16.3
587½	285	DFS Furniture	299½	+13½	5.6	11.9
433	339½	Debenhams	347½	+2½	0.8	16.4
629	459	Dixons Grp	587½	+2½	2.3	17.6
88½	45½	Elec Boutique	64½			
4½	3	ERA Gp	4½			
70½	46½	Essex Furn	49	-1	9.5	9.9
170	150	Falkland Ets	153½			16.7
196½	162½	Fine Art Dev	197½		6.1	15.2
327½	203½	Freen Earth	308½	+1	1.4	19.1
564	445½	Flyng Flw Ust	527½		1.7	
137½	95½	Forminster	137	+½	3.1	
465	350	French Conn†	457½	-2½	0.9	16.2
45½	34½	Gieves	36½		3.9	
282½	217½	Goldsmiths Gp	270		3.8	
145½	125½	Grampian Hdg	126½	-2½	6.7	10.4
868	700	**GUS**	856	+42	2.7	22.1
294½	230½	Hamleys	283	-½	5.0	
116½	75	Hampden Grp	104½		3.5	10.1
343½	268½	Harveys Furn	293½	+6½	3.0	30.4
221½	144½	Hse of Fraser	157	+½	4.4	17.3
164	117½	Hughes (T.J)▼	163		2.6	
633½	489	JJB Sports	550½	+4½	1.5	21.4
1201	709½	**Kingfisher†**	1107	-5	2.6	20.1
355	250	Liberty	272½		1.2	
44½	25½	Lumchight	32			
141	79½	MFI	88	-1	7.0	9.5
654	489	**Marks Spencer**	559	-1	3.0	20.4
48½	35½	Merchant Retail	45		1.0	32.2
291½	216½	Moss Bros†	265½		2.8	
860	492½	**Next**	495½	-10½	4.7	13.0
33½	26	Olives (G)	27½			
505½	382½	Ottakars	505		3.1	16.1
85	43½	Partners	45		1.4	8.3
88½	79½	Partridge Fine	80		7.8	7.0
29½	25½	QS Hldgs	27½			
320	275	Rossbyst	277½		5.3	11.6
107½	85½	Save Group	100	+3½	9.2	
64	46½	Sears	58½	-3	8.0	44.2
44½	29	Signet Group	44½	+½		2.2
587½	389½	Smith WH	551	-7½	3.6	
1300	1050	Sotheby's	1290		1.9	
272	216	Storehouse	234	-3½	4.5	11.8
92	45½	Stylo	70½		8.3	
221½	140½	Thorns	206½	+3	8.1	11.4
127½	70½	Tie Rack	71½	-2	3.6	
3½	2½	Upton & South	2½			26.6
354½	261½	Wickes†	354½	+4	0.7	58.7
373½	280½	Wyevale†	340	-2½	2.5	21.8

SUPPORT SERVICES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
743½	535	AEA Tech	719½	-4	1.5	34.2
205½	129½	Acom	162	-10½		
200	152½	Aggreko	193	+½	2.5	25.7
96	68	Alpha Airpts	95½	+1	7.3	
53	32½	Alphameric	35½			17.4
79	47	Arnie Grp	71½	+1		
533½	362½	Atkins WS	492		1.9	29.0
214½	160	BNB Rest	200½		4.7	12.0
790	507½	BPP†	725		2.8	25.6
783½	637½	BTG	654½	-2½	0.2	
39	17½	Br Thornton	38½			
110½	79½	Brooks Service†	106½	-1	4.7	11.5
905	568½	Business Post	905	+7½	1.6	38.9
2700	1517½	CMG†	2685	+7½	0.4	69.6
469	335	CRT Grp	439		1.2	61.1
972½	812½	Caird Gp	927½	-10	1.6	
498	311½	Capita Group†	483½	-1	0.5	75.0
8½	6½	Chemex	8½		2.9	10.8
257	212½	Corp Services†	254½	-2	2.9	18.7
31½	24½	Coutts Cnsltg	25		0.5	
547½	317½	DCS Grp	526	+6	0.5	
352½	235	Danka Bs Sys	311½	-5	1.1	13.4
420	302	Davis Service†	388	-1	3.7	21.3
830	670	Delphi	751	+18½	1.2	
1017½	682½	Diagonal†	990		0.3	74.6
27½	19½	Eurocopy	20½		14.6	3.4
67½	51½	EW Fact	55		4.6	
75½	51	El Data Prc	71½	-1	3.8	15.9
1502½	927½	FI Group	1352½	-22½	0.6	75.1
496½	409	Gardian IT	446	-5		78.0
455	337	Harvey Nash	445		1.3	
1155	773	Hays	1055	-44	1.2	36.5
58	51½	High-Pointfoot	55½			
289	255½	Hogg Robinsn	285		4.5	13.3
1257½	580	JBA Hldgs	580	-5	1.1	54.0
311	232½	Johnson Cleant	280	-1½	5.6	10.7
69½	42½	Kalamazoo	45½		11.7	
880	570	Kewill Sys	880	+28½	1.4	21.1
24½	13½	Laser-Scan	21			
502½	317½	Lavendon†	472½	-1	1.0	30.7
1657½	1147½	Logica	1582½		0.8	45.4
795	505	Lorant	781½	+6½	1.6	48.6
201½	120½	Lyon Group	199½	-1	1.3	29.2
75½	42½	MDIS	74			
1042½	772½	MMT Comp	1032½	+25	1.4	34.7
147½	109½	MR Group	130½		3.8	17.3
565	320	Macro 4†	552½	+5	5.8	16.0
77½	52½	Mentmore Abbey	76		1.1	22.8
721	478½	Micro Focus	567½	+10		41.9
125½	55	Microgen	125½		5.0	16.7
3300	1825	Misys	2860	-20	0.6	47.8
300½	230½	MITIE Gp	288	-1	1.0	31.6
53½	51½	Nevo Group	53½		3.7	12.1
55½	41½	Oasis	50½		3.3	13.5
680	500	PSD	655		1.6	25.3
836½	635	Parity†	779	+1½	0.8	37.3
365	240	Pegasus	350		2.7	11.9
242½	145	Penna	224		1.2	11.4
255½	151	Photo-Me	240	+5	2.9	23.2
53½	35	Proudfoot	52		1.2	12.3
247½	165	RCO	220	-4	9.1	28.4
305½	218½	RPS Group†	305½	+1½	2.0	25.2
53	25½	Radius†	46	-1	3.0	15.1
465	377½	Real Time	462½	+25	1.6	16.0
113½	79	Rebus	101½	-1	3.3	22.3
193	119½	Reed Executive	173½		2.2	
180	162	Reliance Sec	180		4.8	15.9
418	265	**Rentokil Intl**	391½	-4½	1.0	38.8
205½	152½	Ricardo Group†	191		4.3	24.0
576	456	Robert Walters†	521½	-2	0.9	24.0
510	275	Rolfe & Nolan	330	-45		56.3
382½	297½	Royalblue	320		0.9	43.1
1420	825	Sage Gp	1235	-5	0.3	52.6
157	74	Sanderson	137	-½	4.5	12.9
905	551	Select Appt	896	-5½	0.5	38.4
2405	1475	Sema Gp	2185	+15	0.4	55.7
1310	868	Serco Gp	1195		0.7	50.0
195½	154½	Shanks & McEwan	175		2.9	22.1
905	520	Shared Intl†	855	+7½	0.8	36.0
74	44	Simon Grp†	61½		1.3	16.3
61	37½	Sketchley	50	-½		
285	181½	Skillsgroup†	275	-½	1.9	25.2
125	103	Slo-Plust	104		13.6	10.3
187	92	Superscape VR	148½	-½		
116½	85	Torex†	101½	-1½	2.8	17.0
3300	2250	Tyco Intl	3050		0.2	
126½	86½	WSP Group†	100½		3.5	14.0
225	205	Warner Howrd	205		6.6	9.3
230	176	Waste Mgt Intl	228			53.8
415½	332½	Waste Recycl†	413½	+2	0.8	38.1
238½	199	Whitehead Mann	233½		2.5	19.3
92½	62½	White Young Gm	87½	+2½	5.1	13.3
500	304	Williams	450	-1	3.6	22.9

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
718½	411½	**BT**	653		3.6	18.9
1637½	614½	COLT Telecom	1290	-15		
765	467½	**Cable Wireless**	681	-16	2.0	28.6
453½	264½	Cable&Wire Comm	448½	+9½		
755	352½	Energis	672½	-11		
310	250	Euro Telecom	308½		1.1	25.9
189½	77½	General Cable	183	-1		
445	239½	**Orange**	416½	-2		
422	286½	Securicor	391	-3½	0.6	50.8
109	89½	TeleWest	103½	-½		
662½	298	**Vodafone**	634½	+9	1.0	52.2

TRANSPORT

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
355	210	Air London	337½	-12½	2.4	30.7
357	219	All Nippon Air	266½	+7½	0.5	
518	344½	Arriva	422	-5½	4.0	12.8
388	282½	Assoc Br Portst	357	-½	3.2	17.5
372	284½	Autologic	368½		2.5	
244	166½	Avis Europe	233	+6½	1.6	22.9
640	402½	**BAA**	614	-3½	2.6	18.8
651	498	**Br Airways**	615	-10	3.2	30.8
110½	90½	Clarkson (H)	103½		5.0	11.5
179½	135½	Clydeport Ops	175½		4.0	
380½	317½	Dart	358½	+5½	2.3	17.6
67½	43½	Eurotunnel Uts	54½	-1½		
397½	221½	FirstGroup	388	-3	1.9	27.6
140	125	Fisher (James)†	125		3.2	9.5
690	580	Forth Portst	643½	-1½	2.8	15.7
631½	510	Go-Ahead	631½	+5	1.8	15.1
601½	490	Goode Durrant	591½		2.2	17.5
441	305½	Helphire Gp	380	+3½	0.3	46.7
1055	740	Irish Cont	1055		0.5	22.5
88½	74½	Jacobs†	88		3.2	38.3
92½	60	Lon & Seas Frt	67½			
642½	490	Mersey Docks	633½	-1½	2.9	24.3
187½	138½	NFC	184½		3.8	19.3
913½	676	Natl Express†	907½	+4	1.9	20.5
811	562½	Ocean Group†	811	+2½	2.2	24.9
104½	92½	Ocean Wilson	98½		4.8	17.7
933½	650	**P & O Dfd**	887	-8	4.3	20.1
116½	107½	P & O 5½%	111½	-1	6.2	
1093½	571½	**Railtrack**	1008	+8	2.8	19.1
130	98	Salvesen (C)	116½	+2	6.2	16.7
47½	36	Seacon	40		3.9	30.4
296½	244	Seascope Shp	275		6.7	
311½	180	Servisair	284	+2½	2.5	21.3
1107½	765	Stagecoach	1107½	+2½	1.1	25.2
628	547½	Tibbet & Britn	564	+1	3.9	
300	251	TDG	287½	-1	7.3	18.7
116½	76½	Ugland	101½	-½	6.3	
72½	39½	Utd Carriers†	47½	-2	9.2	

WATER

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
967	780	Anglian	922	-8½	4.9	12.6
335	285	East Surrey	307		4.6	12.4
1053½	907	Hyder	984½	-3	5.8	8.3
124½	115½	Hyder Cnv Prf	123½	-½	8.0	
770	660	Mid Kent Hldgs	760		5.1	11.3
1085	865	**Severn Trent**	938	-21	5.0	10.3
3635	3285	South Staffs	3620	-5	3.2	15.0
1005	864½	South West	988½	-7	4.8	12.5
1043	800	**Thames**	972	+14	4.6	10.9
950	658	**Utd Utilities**	860		5.6	13.9
550	465	Wessex	501½	-2½	4.7	9.7
550	467½	Yorkshire	497½	-2	4.9	9.7

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
225	193	Cafe Inns	220	+1	1.7	16.7
232½	155	Dawson Hldgs	184		3.3	16.5
38½	29	Freepages	37	-½		
65½	52	Megalomedia	52½		0.5	21.6
38	21½	Memory Corp▲	32½			
490	344	Prism Rail	395	-5	2.8	
847½	620	Ramco Energy	857½			
827	740	Southern News	826	+6	3.2	16.2
94½	84½	Southern Vectis	87½		3.0	13.6
27½	14½	Trocadero†	26½	+½		

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension † Ex dividend ‡ Ex scrip ▲ Ex rights issue ▼ Ex all § Ex capital distribution * Figures or report awaited. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gr red yld
116[illegible]	116	Treas 4¾% 1998	116[illegible]†‡		3.96	7.18
100[illegible]	100	Treas 7¼% 1998	100		7.25	7.65
102[illegible]	100[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	100[illegible]	-[illegible]	13.92	6.39
102[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	103[illegible]	-[illegible]	14.98	6.96
104[illegible]	102[illegible]	Exch 12% 1998	102[illegible]	-[illegible]	11.68	6.93
102[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	101[illegible]		9.33	6.87
106[illegible]	104[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	104[illegible]	-[illegible]	11.70	6.77
104[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	103[illegible]		10.11	6.75
99[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	99[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.04	6.58
106[illegible]	105[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	105[illegible]	+[illegible]	9.73	6.55
105[illegible]	104[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	104[illegible]	+[illegible]	8.63	6.47
104[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	104	+[illegible]	7.69	6.31
103[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2000	103[illegible]	+[illegible]	8.23	6.51
114[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	113[illegible]	+[illegible]	11.48	6.47
109[illegible]	108[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	109[illegible]	+[illegible]	9.15	6.47
102[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	102[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.83	6.17

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gr red yld
103[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 7% 2002	103[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.77	6.07
113[illegible]	112[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	113[illegible]	+[illegible]	8.58	6.12
108[illegible]	106[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	108[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.36	5.90
118[illegible]	116[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	117[illegible]	+[illegible]	8.48	6.03
114[illegible]	113	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113[illegible]	+[illegible]	10.15	6.35
93[illegible]	90[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	93[illegible]	+[illegible]	3.76	4.82
119[illegible]	116[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	118[illegible]	+[illegible]	8.00	5.87
104[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	104[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.45	5.90
116[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	115[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.34	5.90
120[illegible]	117[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	119[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.92	5.96
130[illegible]	128[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	130[illegible]	+[illegible]	9.60	6.03
111[illegible]	107[illegible]	Treas 7½% 2006	110[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.78	5.80
112[illegible]	108[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	112[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.91	5.89
107[illegible]	105[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	107[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.47	6.16
123[illegible]	121[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	122[illegible]	+[illegible]	9.56	6.10
119[illegible]	115	Treas 8½% 2007	118[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.17	5.88
111	106[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 2007	110[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.56	5.80
125[illegible]	121[illegible]	Treas 9% 2008	124[illegible]	+[illegible]	7.22	5.82
118[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 8% 2009	117[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.78	5.82
104[illegible]	99[illegible]	Treas 6¼% 2010	103[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.02	5.81
129[illegible]	124[illegible]	Conv 9% 2011	128[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.98	5.83
131[illegible]	125[illegible]	Treas 9% 2012	130[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.91	5.84
98[illegible]	93[illegible]	Treas 5½% 2008-12	98[illegible]	+[illegible]	5.60	5.67
118[illegible]	112[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	117[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.59	5.88

LONGS (over 15 years)

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gr red yld
122[illegible]	116[illegible]	Treas 8% 2013	121[illegible]	+½	6.57	5.84
125[illegible]	118[illegible]	Treas 8% 2015	124[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.43	5.77
135[illegible]	127[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 2017	134[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.52	5.78
129[illegible]	121[illegible]	Tr 8% 2021	128[illegible]	+[illegible]	6.22	5.74

UNDATED

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gr red yld
60[illegible]	55[illegible]	War Ln 3½%	60[illegible]	+½	5.82	
42[illegible]	38[illegible]	Treas 2½%	41[illegible]	+[illegible]	5.99	
67[illegible]	61[illegible]	Consols 4%	65[illegible]	+1	6.09	

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	5%	3%
198[illegible]	194[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2001	198[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.74	3.08
195[illegible]	192[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2003	195[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.80	3.03
126[illegible]	124[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	126[illegible]†	+[illegible]	2.71	2.90
212[illegible]	206[illegible]	Treas IL 2% 2006	212[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.78	2.93
193[illegible]	187[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2009	192[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.80	2.93
203	195[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2011	202[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.81	2.91
168[illegible]	162[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2013	168[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.80	2.89
184[illegible]	175[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2016	183[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.79	2.87
179[illegible]	170[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2020	178[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.82	2.88
152[illegible]	142[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2024	151[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.80	2.85
149[illegible]	140[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	149[illegible]	+[illegible]	2.77	2.82

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CHEERS 30

Gin maker who learnt from bitter experience

BUSINESS

WEEKEND MONEY
SECTION 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY APRIL 25 1998

RK

Slower growth eases rate rise worries

BY JANET BUSH AND NICHOLAS WATT

THE threat of higher interest rates receded yesterday after economic data showed a marked slowdown in growth in the first quarter, leaving the manufacturing sector close to recession.

Gross domestic product grew by 0.4 per cent, the weakest pace of growth since early 1995. This was a significant deterioration from the 0.6 per cent growth recorded in the fourth quarter of last year and the 0.9 per cent achieved in each of the preceding two quarters.

The figures strengthened the growing conviction in the City that interest rates will not be raised again in the current cycle.

Speaking at the launch of the Scottish Business Forum in Glasgow yesterday, Gordon Brown gave a strong hint of further tax cuts for businesses, which have been complaining ever more loudly about the strength of the pound and high interest rates compared with Britain's main trading partners.

The Chancellor highlighted business tax cuts in last month's Budget and said: "We are prepared to look at further changes." He called on the forum to suggest whether the Government's initiatives were effective or whether more needed to be done.

Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, seized on the GDP figures to claim that manufacturing industry was "teetering on the brink of recession".

Yesterday's preliminary figures estimated that service industries grew by 0.8 per cent in the first quarter, down from 0.9 per cent in the final three months of last year. Statisticians estimated that manufacturing industry was flat, neither growing or contracting.

The pound dipped briefly on the figures but finished the day a whisker under DM3.00, little changed from its level towards the close on Thursday.

GUS pays £1.9bn to win bid battle for Argos

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES emerged triumphant yesterday from its bitterly fought £1.9 billion battle for control of Argos, the retail group.

GUS received support from shareholders representing 59 per cent of Argos, including the 15 per cent stake held by Schroders Investment Management, the largest shareholder.

Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale said: "We think this is the beginning of a much stronger business, with their database and our database, and their products and our products going into home shopping."

Graham Frost, deputy chief executive of GUS's home shopping division, will run Argos as a separate division of GUS and manage the integration for at least a few months while the group looks for a permanent appointment. Both internal and external candidates will be considered. The future of Stuart Rose, who came in as chief executive of Argos to replace the ailing Mike Smith at the start of the bid, has not yet been decided. Lord Wolfson said: "His CV requirement when he came in was to be chief executive of a public company. That opportunity has disappeared." Mr Rose said he felt it was too early to talk of what he might do next. He and Lord Wolfson met yesterday after the outcome of the bid had become clear in order to pass on control of the company.

Mr Rose will collect a £540,000 payoff if he leaves the company. He said: "Everybody is very disappointed to lose. We put up a good case, but in the end the shareholders liked their story better than ours."

A deal with Littlewoods, the home shopping specialist, which was put together as part of the Argos defence will now lapse. No compensation will have to be paid by either side.

Argos shares shot up 37p to 645p after the outcome of the bid was announced. GUS ended the day up 42p at 856p. GUS launched its bid for Argos in February, when it first bid 570p a share, or £1.6 billion; this month it raised the offer. Argos shares had been trading at a low of about 400p.

Commentary, page 29

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5863.9	(-34.2)
Yield	2.79%	
FTSE All share	2764.67	(-12.42)
Nikkei	16011.24	(+249.55)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9076.82	(-66.51)*
S&P Composite	1111.54	(-8.04)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5¾%*	(5 7/16%)
Long Bond	102 1/32*	(101 15/32)
Yield	5.96%*	(5.98%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 15/16%	(7 15/16%)
Lifte long gilt future (Jun)	108 11/32	(108 17/32)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6577*	(1.6550)
London:		
$	1.6564	(1.6548)
DM	2.9919	(2.9918)
FFr	10.0310	(10.0490)
SFr	2.4907	(2.4802)
Yen	218.35	(216.46)
£ Index	105.9	(105.9)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7910*	(1.7983)
FFr	6.0070*	(6.0285)
SFr	1.4893*	(1.4895)
Yen	130.85*	(130.03)
$ Index	109.2	(109.1)

Tokyo close Yen 129.78

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jul)	$14.30	($14.30)

GOLD

London close	$312.85	($312.95)

* denotes midday trading price

Rebels put the bar on Nomura's pub plans

BY RICHARD MILES

REBEL landlords have seriously disrupted Nomura's plans to refinance its £1.2 billion acquisition of the Inntrepreneur and Spring Inn pub chains.

In the latest twist to a long-running legal battle, the rebels have won a court ruling that effectively bars Nomura from repossessing any pubs that have fallen into arrears while they pursue their legal action.

The High Court has ruled that the tenants should be "allowed to continue in occupation pending the Court of Appeal judgment", free of the tied arrangement they have with Inntrepreneur.

While the tenants trade outside the tie, Nomura will not receive roughly half the revenues from about a quarter of 4,000 pubs, undermining its efforts to seek a new buyer for the chains or to securitise its assets.

Martin Moore, leader of the rebels' action group, said: "Victory is achieved. Our members will be free to buy a pint of Foster's for 42p, not the 85p that Inntrepreneur charges." He added that the brewing groups had agreed to supply the tenants who had forfeited their licence.

In an allied development, Mr Moore said Inntrepreneur had been forced to release many of the protestors from their tie because of a mis-worded letter dating from 1991. A spokesman for Nomura confirmed that 100 pubs would be released, so long as the lessees paid any arrears.

Nomura, which bought the two pub chains in September 1997 for £1.2 billion, is eager to resolve the litigation because of the potential loss of revenue from drink sales since a new supply agreement came into force last month.

A spokesman for Grand Pub Company, the vehicle formed by Nomura to run the pub chains, said about 800 of the rebels had effectively been trading outside of the tie. Such trading had little financial impact on the bank until it signed the new supply agreement. He said: "From April 1, the balance of tie revenues is roughly split between rent and drink. Now there is more damage-potential than historically."

The stay of repossession has two conditions: the lessees must continue to pay monthly rents and put 20 per cent of any arrears into the court. They have until May 13 to comply with the second condition. Nomura is confident that the appeal in the test case, featuring a company called Target Developments, will be rejected. The bank will then have to consider whether it sues the lessees for loss of income because they have traded outside the tie.

However, it conceded that it was difficult to dispose of the two pub chains or to refinance the deal through a securitisation issue. Instead, it arranged a senior debt issue several weeks ago.

Rebel campaigners believe they can drag out the legal battle into the next millennium. If they lose the appeal, for which no date has yet been set, then Mr Moore says they will take their case to the European courts.



Bernie Ebbers's cash bonus makes him America's highest paid chief executive

WorldCom chief gets £10m for MCI deal

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

BERNIE EBBERS, chief executive of WorldCom, received a $17 million (£10 million) cash bonus for gazumping British Telecom to seal the $40 billion takeover of rival telecoms company MCI.

Mr Ebbers, whose basic salary was $950,000, was also granted 1.2 million WorldCom share options that will be worth $50 million at redemption in ten years if the company grows at a modest 10 per cent a year. He earned $3.5 million in 1996.

Mr Ebbers is the driving force behind WorldCom's meteoric rise in the telecommunications sector. Last October, he destroyed BT's hopes of establishing a presence in the US by linking up with MCI.

WorldCom made a rival bid when the BT deal was already close to completion and then fought off a challenge from GTE, another competitor, to seal the $40 billion merger, at the time the world's largest.

Mr Ebbers, a former basketball coach who wears cowboy boots and hats, is one of the most unorthodox US chief executives. He is famously outspoken and treats corporate America like a Monopoly board.

His cash bonus makes him America's highest paid chief executive, if share options are excluded. The next highest salary and bonus was paid to Richard Scrushy, of Healthsouth, a healthcare group that also operates in the UK, who received $13.4 million. Mr Scrushy was also awarded share options worth $93 million.

However, if share options are included Mr Ebbers trails well behind America's best-rewarded executive. Sandy Weill, the chairman of Travelers Group who arranged the $146 billion merger with Citicorp earlier this year, tops the list with $223 million in "long-term compensation" last year. However, unlike Mr Ebbers, Mr Weill cannot spend his fortune immediately. Second place is taken by Roberto Goizueta, the late chairman of Coca-Cola, who received long-term compensation worth $107 million in 1997.

Lawson to step down at Barclays

LORD LAWSON of Blaby, Chancellor of the Exchequer during the 1980s, is to step down as a non-executive director of Barclays.

Barclays said its rules require non-executive directors to retire at age 65 unless asked to stay on to carry out a specific role for a year. Lord Lawson is aged 66. There is no immediate replacement for Lord Lawson, who will step down at next week's annual meeting.

Lord Lawson received a £36,000 fee last year from his directorship. He joined Barclays in 1990.

Lord Lawson recently courted controversy by starring in a TV advertisement for M&G, the fund manager, on the grounds that he was godfather of the tax-free personal equity plan. However, the M&G pep did not fare well.

Commentary, page 29

Advanta to sell UK card stake to RBS

BY ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

ADVANTA, the US credit card operator best known in this country for its association with the Royal Bank of Scotland, is close to divesting itself of its main British operation.

The move may be used as evidence that that the aggressive marketing tactics employed by Advanta and other US credit card entrants have failed. It may also curtail the revolutionary impetus that has seen numerous cut-price credit cards in the UK.

Advanta, alongside other American card issuers including People's Bank and Capital One, has targeted Britain in the last couple of years. Attempts to capture market share have centred on the aggressive reduction in the cost of credit. The Americans have exerted intense competitive pressure on established British card operators. Before the arrival of the Americans credit card interest rates were rarely below 20 per cent a year. Rates have since come down to less than 15 per cent and extended special deals have included rates as low as 7 per cent.

Much store was put on the ability of the Americans to credit score customers more effectively. The theory was that if systems were in place to reduce the occurrence of bad debts the interest charges on plastic transactions could also be brought down. Entrance costs, mostly marketing and advertising, will have also been onerous. Ownership of the parent, Advanta Group in the US, has also changed recently, which could have changed strategy imperatives.

Royal Bank of Scotland owns 51 per cent of the RBS Advanta credit card joint venture and has an option to buy the other 49 per cent. A spokesman for RBS said it was actively considering exercising the option. It is thought, however, that a deal is imminent.

Commentary, page 29

Suitor would pay only £4m for La Senza

BY FRASER NELSON

LA SENZA, the lingerie chain floated on the stock market at £150 million two years ago, has said that its potential bidder is unwilling to pay more than £4 million.

Gary Klesch, the debt trader who rescued Knickerbox in January, is understood to have made an offer for La Senza — telling the company the shares are worth no more than 12p.

The shares, which joined the market at 160p in May 1996, plunged a further 44 per cent to close at 12½p yesterday — cementing La Senza's position among the worst ten performing stocks in London over the last two years.

Earlier, La Senza broke off talks with Ann Summers and the Tulchan Group after both companies said they would not pay over its then market cap of £8 million.

La Senza, which has 52 stores in the UK, had originally planned to open 174 outlets by 2001.

ScottishPower pulls plug on US takeover

BY GEORGE SIVELL

SCOTTISHPOWER has aborted a possible $4 billion (£2.4 billion) takeover in America, it emerged yesterday.

The UK utility revealed it had been in talks with Florida Progress, an electrical utility in America, over a takeover, but that discussions had now been called off.

It is understood that ScottishPower decided not to press ahead with the deal after due diligence work on Florida's second-largest public utility.

ScottishPower is expected, however, to press on with its search for a strategic overseas acquisition.

Florida Progress, which both generates and distributes electricity, has 1.3 million customers, sales of about $3 billion a year and assets of $5.8 billion. Its main subsidiary is Florida Power Corporation, which operates in the central and northern parts of Florida. It also has coal mining, marine operations and rail services.

Last week Richard Korpan, the chief executive officer of Florida Progress, told shareholders at the annual meeting that the company was seeking acquisitions, alliances and mergers.

Shares in ScottishPower rose 1½p to 560p yesterday after the announcement, valuing the company on the stock market at £6.7 billion. At yesterday's share price of $40 3/16 Florida Progress was worth $3.9 billion on the New York Stock Exchange. The shares have risen strongly from $27 a year ago. Brokers had forecast earnings per share of $2.74 this year against a previous $2.51. They were expecting a rise to $2.87 next year.

ScottishPower made its announcement yesterday after the volume of Florida Progress share dealings reached 1.1 million on Thursday, five times the normal level. Previous ScottishPower bid conquests include Manweb, the power company in the North West, and Southern Water.

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A WEEK IN THE CITY

Bad chemistry set the tone this week, from UK research laboratories to American banking halls. The flotation of Thomson Travel Group flew into turbulence, and another insurer was hit with a record fine. To round it off, Ireland pipped the UK in the world league table of economic performance.

Things took a turn for the worse at British Biotechnology, the drug development company, which has seen its share price implode over the last year. The company is under investigation by the US Securities and Exchange Commission over possible violations of US securities laws. Andy Millar, director of clinical research, was dismissed for disclosing confidential information to shareholders.

The forthcoming flotation of Thomson Travel had private investors signing up in their thousands. Trading is due to start on May 18, with the company valued at between £1.4 billion and £1.7 billion, but the threat of industrial action by pilots at Britannia Airways, Thomson's charter airline, could disrupt proceedings. Balpa, the pilots' union, wants improvements to the employee share scheme.

The current round of American banking mergers turned sour, when Mellon Bank rejected a $24 billion (£14.3 billion) approach by Bank of New York. Earlier discussions broke down — predictably — over who should lead the combined group. A nasty battle is guaranteed.

Observers were treated to an excrutiating insight into the boardroom machinations at Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham. Jan Leschly, chief executive of SB, told MPs of his "astonishment" upon learning that Glaxo did not wish to proceed with the planned £100 billion merger. It appeared that Sir Richard Sykes, chairman of Glaxo, could not persuade his board to back the deal he had agreed three weeks earlier.

Sun Life of Canada was fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £125,000, over lapses linked to compensating the victims of pensions mis-selling. Gloom spread through the high street, as DFS Furniture issued its second profits warning in two months. The company blamed bad weather at Easter — having previously blamed a drop in spending on the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Next it will blame the World Cup. Tie Rack announced a 42 per cent fall in pre-tax profits, blaming the strong pound and problems in Asia.

The tussle for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars rumbled on, as Volkswagen said it would top the existing £340 million bid from BMW. Argos spent a last, frantic week rallying support against the £1.9 billion takeover bid from Great Universal Stores. Akzo Nobel, the Dutch pharmaceutical and chemical group, unveiled an agreed £1.8 billion offer for Courtaulds, paving the way for a hugely enlarged fibres group.

Workers at Vauxhall voted to accept a three-year package linking salaries to the strength of the pound against the mark. Ireland has overtaken the UK in the world league table of economic performance. The UK slipped from 11th to 12th in the annual competitiveness table compiled by the International Institute of Management Development.

JON ASHWORTH

US Airways poses new obstacle to BA alliance

BY OLIVER AUGUST AND JON ASHWORTH

THE long-stalled alliance of British Airways and American Airlines faced a fresh obstacle yesterday, when American unveiled a separate alliance with US Airways, BA's former US partner.

Both airlines insisted that the deal, which involves combining frequent-flyer programmes, would not jeopardise their own alliance, which is being scrutinised by regulators in Brussels and Washington. However, it could become a problem if code-sharing on routes was seen to give BA-American too dominant a slice of the domestic US market.

US Airways and American will code-share on certain routes operated by their regional partners, American Eagle and US Airways Express, but have yet to discuss a wider linking of services. US Airways operates shuttle flights on the East Coast — neatly complementing American, which is strong in central and western America and has an extensive feeder network into the Caribbean and Latin America.

BA sold its investment in US Airways (formerly USAir) more than a year ago. The carriers introduced code-sharing on flights, and combined frequent-flyer programmes. BA made a provision of £125 million against its USAir stake in 1995, but later wrote it back.

American said the alliance with US Airways, headed by Stephen Wolf, was in response to a deal involving NorthWest Airlines, which is taking a $519 million (£311 million) stake in Continental Airlines, and intends to link routes. United Airlines, the largest US carrier, yesterday said it had suspended talks concerning a code-sharing/frequent-flyer alliance with Delta Air Lines.

Bob Crandall, who retires next month as chairman and chief executive of American, said that the alliance with US Airways was "a good match" that brought many complementary benefits. He made no comment on whether the deal might sway regulators, who are assessing whether BA-American will be damaging to competition.

A spokesman for American said that the deal as it stands would not affect deliberations. BA said that it was "unlikely" that regulators would change their stance in light of the deal. The US Airways link would not lead to a straining of relations between BA and American.

Karel Van Miert, the European Competition Commissioner, is expected to deliver his ruling on BA-American next month. Regulators in Washington are separately working on a new "open skies" aviation treaty between the UK and America.

Northern savers rocked

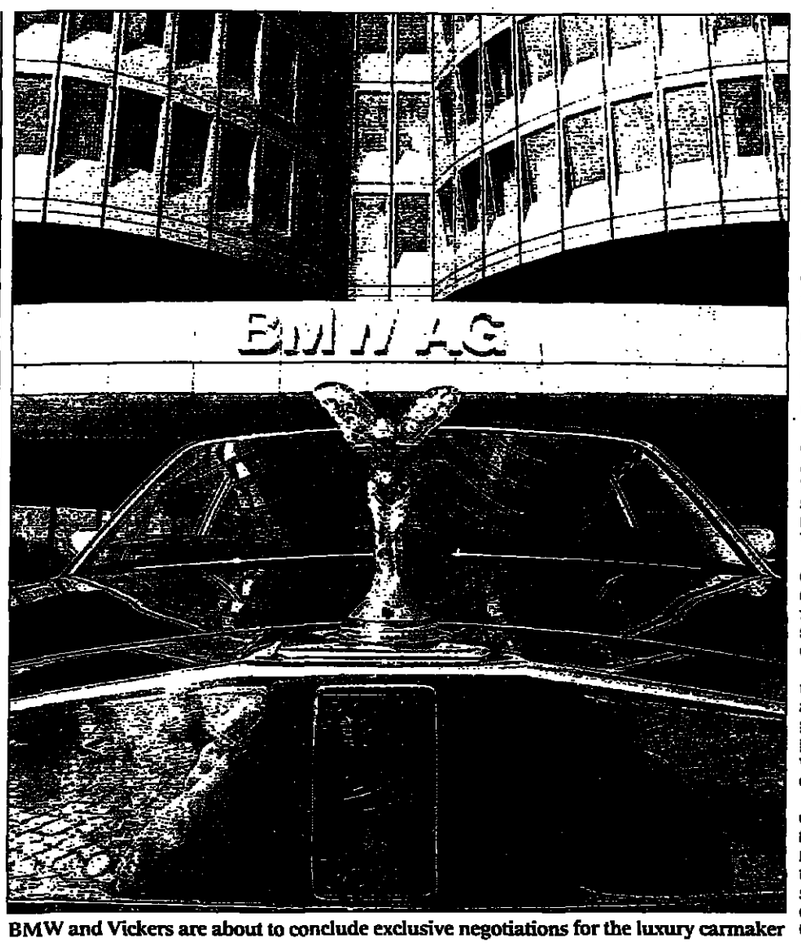
BY SUSAN EMMETT

NORTHERN ROCK, the recently floated Newcastle bank, has enraged its savers by cutting rates by as much as 1.85 per cent for some investors in a restructuring operation.

The former building society is cutting the number of postal accounts from 11 to three and reducing the rates in its 90-day, 60-day and 30-day notice accounts at a time when interest rates are stable.

Northern Rock defended the move as "a further step in improving its investment service", saying savers would have easier access to their funds.

Weekend money, page 62



BMW and Vickers are about to conclude exclusive negotiations for the luxury carmaker

VW waiting in the wings with bid for Rolls-Royce

BY ROBERT COLE
CITY CORRESPONDENT

THE board of Volkswagen is today set to ratify plans to relaunch a takeover bid for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars. But the German carmaker faces a difficult challenge if it is to secure control of the premier British motor marque.

Both Vickers, the current owner of the company, and aero engine firm Rolls-Royce, which claims the right to sanction any sale, still appear to favour a deal with BMW, VW's arch rival.

The next seven days will be crucial for VW. On Wednesday, Vickers stages its annual meeting, which will give shareholders the chance to express their preference.

On Thursday, the moratorium period between BMW and Vickers for exclusive negotiations ends. Assuming the period is not extended, VW will then be free to put detailed proposals to Vickers.

VW's supervisory board is expected to endorse a strategy that includes a promise to make a £370 million bid for the luxury car marque, to safeguard British jobs and to enter negotiations to buy Cosworth, the engine maker.

Japan to spend more and tax less

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

JAPAN yesterday announced details of a record 16.65 trillion yen (£76 billion) economic stimulus package. The measures include 12.3 trillion yen of real spending to generate additional demand in the nation's moribund economy.

The package is a mix of public works spending, tax cuts and measures to reinvigorate the stricken property sector. Moving away from its tight fiscal policy, the Government switched priorities to boosting an economy teetering on the edge of a recession.

The package allocates a total of 7.7 trillion yen for public works projects by central Government and local authorities. Most of it will be spent on building roads, ports and bridges, but in a new departure, the Government plans to funnel 1.5 trillion yen into new information infrastructure such as a telecommunications project to link Japan's schools with a fibre-optic network.

Missing from the package were the permanent income and corporate tax cuts that business leaders, politicians and even the head of Japan's central bank insist are vital to encouraging personal consumption and capital investment by firms.

But the Government said it would take a broad look at income taxes and would consider reducing corporate taxes within the next three years.

The package was unveiled after the markets closed, but a hint by the Finance Minister about permanent tax cuts buoyed Japanese share prices earlier. The remark helped the Nikkei average to recover the 16,000 level and close up 1.58 per cent at 16,011.24.

It was the fifth and biggest stimulus package since last October. But it amounted to a serious loss of face for Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, who had staked his prestige on his pet project, a fiscal reform law aimed at cutting the budget deficit.

Results slump at brokerages

BROKERAGES in Japan, punished hard for scandals, announced grim results yesterday. Nomura Securities, the country's top brokerage, said that pre-tax profit plunged 40.7 per cent to Y98.1 billion (£448 million) in the year to March. The firm posted a net profit of Y76.3 billion, reversing the previous year's heavy loss of Y242.7 billion, thanks to its overseas operations.

Daiwa, the second-largest broker in Japan, slumped into the red with a Y13.2 billion pre-tax loss in the year to March. That was a huge reversal from its Y49.9 billion pre-tax profit in the previous year.

Nikko Securities was hit even harder, with a Y61.8 billion pre-tax loss, down from its Y28.5 billion pre-tax profit the previous year. Japan's other "big four" broker, Yamaichi, collapsed last November buckling under the weight of Y428 billion in losses.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Mild weather hits Centrica gas sales

CENTRICA yesterday warned shareholders that the unusually mild weather in the first quarter has resulted in lower gas sales and lower market prices for gas. The company also told the annual meeting in London that the business environment would remain difficult for the full year. However, Sir Michael Perry, chairman, said he was confident the company could maintain the progress achieved since the demerger of British Gas last year.

Ofgas, the industry regulator, yesterday said that up to 3.5 million gas consumers, equating to 17.5 per cent of the market, had opted to switch from Centrica to an independent gas supplier in the newly competitive market. The announcement was made as gas competition came on stream in an area that includes the West Midlands, Wiltshire and Wales, with some 3.2 million homes. Sir Michael said: "The benefits of competition to customers are clear and we have consistently supported its introduction." **Tempus, page 31**

Tring in cash call

TRING INTERNATIONAL, the trouble-torn supplier of cut-price compact discs, is hoping to restructure its debts by calling on shareholders for £1.1 million in a rights issue. Philip Robinson, the chief executive, who is putting up £520,000, has promised to subscribe to the issue in respect of the 12 per cent that he owns. He could end up with 26 per cent. As part of the deal he is also being given share options that could return him about £320,000 if the shares rise from 6p to 14p. **Tempus, page 31**

Grafton offer agreed

BRITISH DREDGING, the building materials group, yesterday agreed a £35.3 million bid from Grafton, the builders' merchants. The deal sent shares in British Dredging up from 184½p to 191½p. Grafton said the deal would add a further 26 builders merchants in the Midlands to its existing 41 locations that are mainly in the South. Michael Chadwick, chairman of Grafton, said: "This is an important step in building a strong UK business to complement our leading position in Ireland."

Butte Mining jury rests

JURORS in the ten-month-old Butte Mining trial were sent home for the weekend, after deliberating for three days at Chichester Rents, an Old Bailey annexe. They resume on Monday. Clive Smith, John Clarke, Malcolm Clews and Roy Bichan deny conspiring to defraud investors in connection with the flotation of Butte Mining, which came to the market in October 1987. They also deny failing to disclose beneficial interests and concealing the identity of beneficiaries of the issue.

London keeps award

LONDON ELECTRICITY has been allowed to retain its Charter Mark after an investigation by an independent judging panel. The company's entitlement to the award was called into question after a dramatic rise in the level of customer complaints in 1997. The final decision was taken after a six-month probation period that ended in February. Baroness Perry, chair of the judging panel, said the company had "some way to go", but had shown progress.

Jeyes optimistic

SHARES in Jeyes rose from 142p to 154p after the household products group said that trading in the first 12 weeks of the current year had been most encouraging. Anthony Vice, chairman, told shareholders at the annual meeting: "Trading in the first 12 weeks of 1998 is most encouraging and we view the remainder of the year with optimism." The Jeyes annual meeting also approved proposals to buy back up to 10 per cent of the company's shares.

P&O Hong Kong plan

P&O said yesterday that it has reached agreement with Shougang Holding (Hong Kong) and Shougang Concord International Enterprises to merge their respective bulk shipping operations, forming a new joint venture called Associated Bulk Carriers. ABC will be incorporated in Hong Kong with principal offices in London and Hong Kong. ABC will be held 50 per cent by P&O, 25 per cent by SH and 25 per cent by SCI.

Lion Nathan bid talks

LION NATHAN, the Australasian beer group, revealed yesterday that it was in talks with a potential bidder and that it would be holding talks over the weekend. A spokesman for Lion said the company hoped to be able to give shareholders more details on Monday. Lion has 42 per cent of the Australian market through its Castlemaine XXXX, Swan and Tooheys brands and about a 54 per cent market share in New Zealand through its Lion and Steinlager brands.

Pascoe's into the red

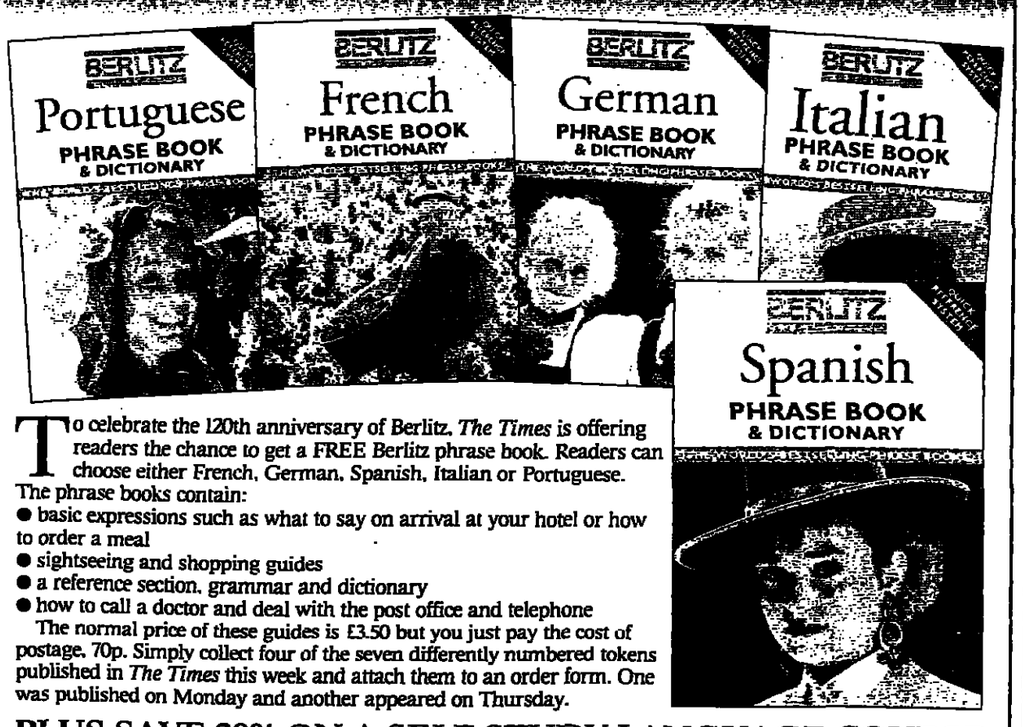
PASCOE'S, the food producer, recorded a pre-tax loss of £243,000 in the year to January 3 against a previous profit of £200,000. Losses per share were 12.39p against earnings of 4.22p. The company, which has a deficit on distributable reserves of £203,000, said it hopes to resume dividend payments on preference shares in the summer of 1999. The company said sales in the first quarter of the current year were up 5 per cent.

SBS maiden dividend

SBS, the AIM-listed information technology staff agency, raised pre-tax profits by 50 per cent to £530,000 in the six months to February 28 on sales up 32 per cent to £11.3 million. Earnings rose by 41 per cent to 5.2p out of which a maiden interim dividend of 1p has been declared. SBS, which acquired JCC, the information technology contractor, last month for £4.5 million, said the company was proving an excellent fit. SBS shares fell from 332½p to 317½p.

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THE TIMES Berlitz PHRASE BOOKS TOKEN 7

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CHANGING TIMES

Sacked staff at Magnet accept payoff deal

BY OUR BUSINESS STAFF

BRITAIN'S longest-running industrial dispute ended yesterday when workers sacked by Magnet, the kitchens company, almost two years ago, voted to accept a payoff.

The former employees, dismissed by Magnet in Darlington, voted by 47 to 34 to accept a severance package. They had launched a campaign 20 months ago after being sacked over a pay dispute.

Magnet recently tabled an offer of £850,000 to be divided among workers after talks at the conciliation service Acas.

The GMB union, Ucatt and Transport and General Workers Union balloted the surviving 82 workers, who remained in dispute.

All but one of the workers took part in the ballot, which produced a 58 per cent vote in favour of accepting the money. The workers had held out to try to win their jobs back, attracting support from other trade unionists as well as MPs and entertainers.

But the company, a subsidiary of Berisford, ruled out reinstatement, leaving a financial settlement as the only way out of the dispute.

Slough's donation to Tories doubles

BY JON ASHWORTH

SLOUGH ESTATES, the property group headed by Sir Nigel Mobbs, donated £42,000 to the Conservative Party last year — double the amount donated in 1996.

The company said it always doubled its donations in an election year. The move had nothing to do with its association with John McGregor, the former Transport Secretary, who sits on the board as a non-executive director. Slough has a long tradition of donating to Tory party funds.

Slough said it believed that the policy was in the best interests of the group and its shareholders. It recognised, however, that the whole question of political donations is up for debate, and was deliberating over whether to continue its policy. Companies are cutting back on political donations.

Last year's £42,000 donation compared with £21,500 in 1996, according to the 1997 annual report. A further £2,000 was given to Aims of Industry and £3,000 to the Centre for Political Studies, both right-wing think-tanks. The company said donations were agreed collectively by the board.

MPs back mutuality at the Nationwide

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

A GROUP of 100 MPs is backing Nationwide Building Society's fight against two members standing for election to the board, with the aim of making the society either pay dividends or float.

At a meeting earlier this week, the all-party building societies group, said it was extremely unfortunate that an election on the issue of conversion was taking place again this year.

Andrew Love, MP, chairman, said: "Building societies are facing what is in effect a general election on their status every year. The issue of conversion was fully debated at the Nationwide last year when members voted overwhelmingly in favour of mutuality."

"The public support for building societies is evident in their growing share of both the mortgage and savings markets," he said.

The two standing for election are Michael Hardern, the freelance butler who failed, by a margin of three to one, to gain a seat on the board last year, and Andrew Muir, a recruitment consultant, who wants Nationwide to distribute some of its surplus cash to members.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.66	2.48
Austria Sch	22.05	20.39
Belgium Fr	64.95	59.99
Canada $	2.515	2.327
Cyprus CypE	0.920	0.849
Denmark Kr	12.00	11.11
Finland Mkk	9.63	8.88
France Fr	10.50	9.72
Germany Dm	3.16	2.91
Greece Dr	547	508
Hong Kong $	13.73	12.53
Iceland	131	111
Ireland Pr	1.24	1.15
Israel Shk	6.62	5.97
Italy Lira	3132	2895
Japan Yen	231.37	213.84
Malta	0.689	0.630
Netherlds Gld	3.558	3.263
New Zealand $	3.12	2.88
Norway Kr	13.05	12.11
Portugal Esc	318.76	296.73
S Africa Rd	9.11	8.15
Spain Pta	266.61	248.82
Sweden Kr	13.67	12.57
Switzerland Fr	2.64	2.42
Turkey Lira	417199	397321
USA $	1.772	1.629

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

"It would have been so easy to go forward. I would have been a hero and everybody else would have been heroes. But 12 months from now it would have been horrendous..."

Sir Richard Sykes, chairman of Glaxo Wellcome, gives his first interview since the aborted merger deal with SmithKline Beecham. Business, The Sunday Times, tomorrow

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هكذا من الاصل

Wolfson's cash carries the day

Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale may have succeeded in persuading Jim Cox that Argos was only worth 650p a share but the stock market yesterday indicated that the real value to GUS could be considerably higher. News of the GUS victory sent its share price soaring, adding £2.7 billion to the company's capitalisation, against the £1.9 billion it is shelling out to buy Argos.

Wolfson judged his price finely. The consensus view in the City is that another 20p would have ensured his success instead of putting him in a nail-biting fight to the finish. But the intensely fought nature of the contest will have made success all the sweeter. Conversely, to have lost by such a slim margin is tough on Stuart Rose and the campaign team at Argos. They made a plausible case for how, under new, vigorous management, the company could have been rapidly invigorated.

It would have been a gamble for investors to back Mr Rose, and his even more recently recruited chairman, Peter Birch. The fact that the Prudential came out at a relatively early stage to profess its decision to stick with Argos was strong praise; it could not be seen merely as the Pru's usual stance of backing incumbent management.

But it was always likely that the fate of Argos would rest with one man. Jim Cox waited until the last moment before deciding that he found Wolfson's cash more persuasive than the arguments emanating from another corner of his own organisation. The Schroder fund manager opted for certainty over risk. With 15 per cent of Argos in his portfolio, any faith Cox may have had in Rose had to be balanced against the effect on his performance rating if Rose had failed to deliver or the market moved against the retail sector.

Those with long memories may recall another famous attempt to buy a store group for cash. Almost a decade ago, property group Mountleigh focused its attentions on Storehouse. A price of 450p a share was mooted as a reasonable offer for the Habitat, BHS and Mothercare group. But the man who had put together the group was advised by his bankers, Kleinwort Benson, that this offer was too meagre to be countenanced. Mountleigh went away, without ever making a formal bid and Sir Terence Conran has mused much on the deal that might have been. Mountleigh eventually went bust, even though it had been saved from paying over generously for the retailer. Storehouse survives but even now its shares languish at little more than half the price that was so haughtily rejected.

Turning down the GUS cash would have required strong nerves.

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Failing to use its own initiative

The Private Finance Initiative has been imbued with miraculous powers. It was to work the magic that would have major public projects wrought without hurting the public finances. Hospitals, prisons, roads and bridges ... anything, it seemed, would be possible with a wave of the PFI wand. Now, with Treasury fanfares, comes the announcement of an exciting new development from the PFI team. Is it a school? Is it a tunnel beneath the Thames? Another Dome, perhaps? Well, not exactly. It is a programme for teaching civil servants about the PFI.

This is, no doubt, exciting for Price Waterhouse, which has won the contract and is already bolstering its income by proffering PFI advice to the public sector. The development will, however, generate rather less enthusiasm among those who had hoped to see the PFI achieving considerably more than it has so far.

The brainchild of the last Government, the PFI has so far produced just £9 billion of contracts. When the current Government took office, much was made of the fact that PFI was to benefit from the special attention of Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General and a man who brought real business experience into Government. Much has since emerged to embellish Mr Robinson's image as the commercial face of Labour, complete with multi-millionaire benefactrice and off-shore trust fund. But his talents have taken time to impact on PFI.

A year ago, he appointed Malcolm Bates to see how the system could be improved. Six weeks later, Bates made his recommendations, one of which was for special training geared to the needs of government departments.

It took six months before the tender for the training contract was announced. More than four months after that, the contract has been awarded.

Mr Robinson has been involved in other matters during this time — there was the bungled launch of the Isa, for instance — but at this rate of progress, any hopes of new PFI hospitals slicing through waiting lists are likely to be sadly disappointed.

Credit bargains may not last

The great banking mystery is why competition is not squeezing margins by putting interest rates to savers up and charges down. The exception has appeared to be credit cards. Ambitious new entrants from across the Atlantic really did seem willing to break the British taboo on price competition to establish themselves in the market, even if most of the bargain offers quickly ran out once a new borrower was hooked.

A growing core of informed consumers clearly liked this development so much that they surfed from one special offer to the next, dragging their debts with them and challenging card issuers to offer permanently attractive terms. But British banks' addiction to fat gross margins may yet win the day.

Advanta, one of the most aggressive and seemingly determined of the new card issuers, now looks poised to abandon its joint venture with the Royal Bank of Scotland, which has thereby been able to play both games at once. The problem, unsurprisingly, appears to be the lack of potentially lucrative returns. This has suddenly become pressing for US financial services groups, which now find themselves at the eye of a hurricane of cost-cutting consolidation.

Rivals claim they are still committed to shaking up the UK market. Sceptical customers might prefer to grab the bargains while they last.

So farewell Nigel

IF ANY top politician could make a successful second career in the City, you would think it would be Nigel Lawson, one of the few Chancellors in history who understood what he was doing. But somehow it never came off. Lord Lawson was just too clever and too arrogant to be anything but the boss. The City prefers dull but sound men such as Lords Boardman and Hurd of NatWest. By contrast, Lord Lawson even boasted of losing gravitas.

Pearson to receive £142m in Future Publishing buyout

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

PEARSON, the media and information group, yesterday virtually dismantled its new entertainment division by selling Future Publishing, its consumer publishing business, for £142 million to a management buyout team backed by Apax Partners.

Future, which publishes titles such as *Total Guitar* and *Mountain Biking UK* yesterday launched a new title, *Redline*, dedicated to "fast cars! mad bikes! hot birds!"

The group was founded by Chris Anderson, the entrepreneur, on his kitchen table and sold to Pearson in 1994 for £52.5 million. Mr Anderson is now buying back in-to the company with a "significant minority stake" and will be non-executive chairman.

The sale fits with the policy of Marjorie Scardino, Pearson's chief executive, of tightening the focus of the group and concentrating on areas where Pearson can achieve market leadership. Although it has been growing fast, Future, in terms of the value of copies sold, is estimated to be the UK's fifth-largest consumer magazine publisher.

"This sale allows their [Future's] management team to focus on what they do best: produce great consumer magazines. And it enables Pearson to concentrate more of our resources on the media businesses where we have, or can build, market-leading positions," Mrs Scardino said. A small loss-making video operation is also expected to be sold soon, and Nick Alexander, the head of Pearson New Entertainment, will also leave the company.

Pearson's share price rose 9p yesterday to 955p on news of the disposal.

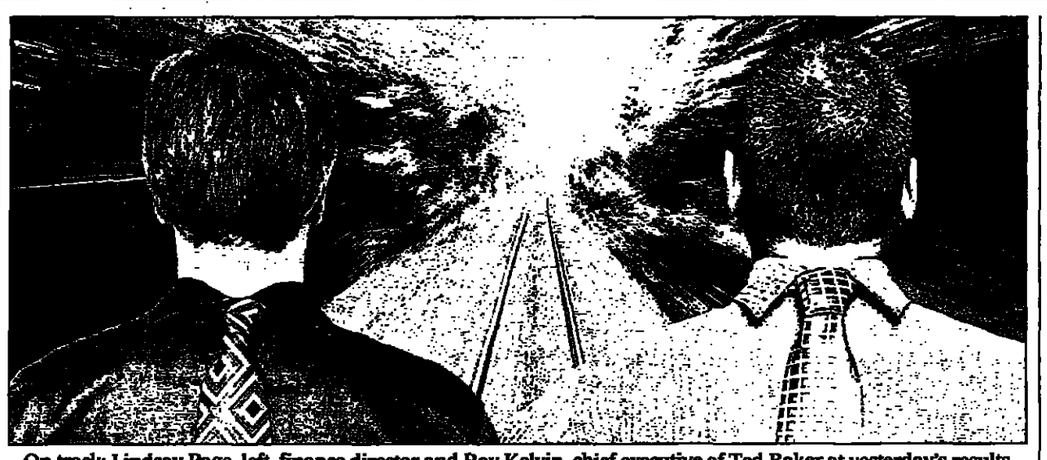
Apart from Future Publishing, the businesses being sold include Edicorp Publications, the French computing magazine publisher, and Futurenet, the commercial Website. In 1997 the combined businesses made operating profits of £9.3 million on turnover of £81.5 million. The three businesses cost Pearson a total of £85 million, including funding and deferred considerations.

Pearson will receive £125 million in cash and Apax will also meet £17 million in deferred payments arising out of the original acquisitions.

Future Publishing Holdings' management team will be led by Greg Ingham, chief executive. The deal is being styled a "company buyout" with everyone at Future and Edicorp being granted shares or options in the new company.

Apax, which has been taking an increasing interest in investments in the media sector, sees its investment as a long-term one. Apax Partners manages $3.4 billion in private equity funds worldwide, more than £800 million of which is in the UK. Its international specialist media group backed Chris Evans's Ginger Media Group in its acquisition of Virgin Radio.

Other Pearson disposals in the past year, including Mindscape, the CD-Rom publisher, and its stake in SES, the Luxembourg company that operates the Astra satellite system, have brought in more than £400 million. Pearson appears to have sold all its more peripheral ventures and may now concentrate on acquisitions and developing its remaining core businesses.



On track: Lindsay Page, left, finance director and Ray Kelvin, chief executive of Ted Baker at yesterday's results

Ted Baker sees sales soar ahead

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TED BAKER, the clothing designer and retailer, dodged the woes besetting others in the sector last year, increasing same-store sales by 12.9 per cent, its first as a listed company.

Group sales, including wholesale operations, were 47.3 per cent ahead in the year to January 31 at £20.7 million and pre-tax profit was £3.27 million (£1.12 million). On earnings per share of 9.53p, the company will pay a maiden final dividend of 3p per share on June 19.

The company said it has made a strong start to the new financial year, with wholesale sales up by more than 70 per cent for the first 11 weeks against the same period last year and retail sales ahead by 18 per cent, both of which are in line with expectations.

Ted Baker is planning to capitalise on the success of the brand by launching a skincare range for men. Ted Baker Skinwear products will be made available in September. The company, which never advertises but relies on word of mouth, is also preparing to launch a contemporary suit collection under the Edward Baker name. Women's wear sales now account for a fifth of turnover.

Tempus, page 31

Stakis's casinos recover

BY DOMINIC WALSH

STAKIS, the hotel and casino operator, fully justified the recent sharp rise in its share price yesterday with a buoyant second-quarter trading update.

While the hotels division continued to trade strongly, with a 14 per cent rise in room yields in the three months to March, its previously troubled casinos arm showed it has turned the corner. Increased attendances and a rise in spend per head boosted the cashdrop by 14 per cent.

Its expanding LivingWell health and fitness business improved turnover from £4.5 million to £5.2 million, and subscription revenue rose by 26 per cent. A further six clubs are in the pipeline, which would take its total to 66. Total turnover across the three divisions rose from £73.5 million to £85.4 million.

Tempus, page 31

MEPC disposal plan nears end

BY RICHARD MILES

MEPC, the property group, has virtually completed its disposal of overseas assets with the $369 million (£230 million) sale of its remaining office and industrial properties in America.

The deal with affiliates of Equity Office Properties Trust, Duke Realty Investments and Weeks Corporation helped to lift MEPC's shares 9p to a five-year high of 624p.

Earlier this week, MEPC sold its US shopping centres to General Growth Properties for $871 million, and in February it sold two Australian developments for £206 million. Negotiations are advanced on the remaining two retail properties in Australia. Liquidation of the overseas portfolio has so far raised $1.32 billion for MEPC.

James Tuckey, chief executive, said it had taken only six months to dispose of the properties since MEPC took the decision to concentrate on the UK and return about £300 million of capital to shareholders.

Mr Tuckey said the US disposals will reap a gain of more than $100 million before costs and taxes.



Tuckey: rapid progress

Laings to float Eskmuir

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

THE former management team of Laing Properties is to return to the stock market after an eight-year absence with the £150 million flotation of Eskmuir Properties.

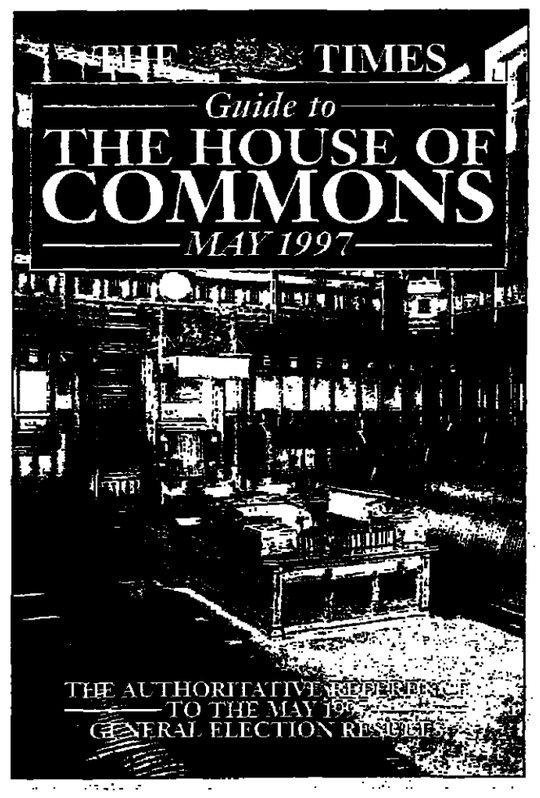
The Laing family launched Eskmuir as a private investment vehicle in 1990 within months of the £500 million takeover of Laing Properties by P&O and Chelsfield.

After the Eskmuir flotation the Laing family shareholding is expected to be reduced to 55 per cent. Although no directors are selling shares, members of the family are expected to net about £25 million from the sale of their shares.

The family and associated trusts invested an initial £63 million in Eskmuir. Since then the company has amassed gross assets of £283 million. Pre-tax profits were £7.9 million last year.

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Small world

THERE would normally be no great surprise in anyone walking out of BZW in the wake of the CSFB takeover, except the latest bunch of refugees are joining Apax Partners. So what on earth does a venture capitalist want with BZW's smaller companies sales team and market-makers?

I ring Stephen Georgiadis, a director of Apax. He seems a little surprised that I know, but rallies manfully. Apax is talking to various regulators, including the Stock Exchange, about setting up its own institutional share dealing operation on behalf of smaller companies that feel they are getting a rough deal from the big securities houses.

"We think the time is right for creating a dedicated investment bank for smaller companies," he tells me. True: at present, if your market capitalisation is not far enough into the stratosphere, you tend to get the trainees and a distinctly Skoda service from the Megabanks of this world. Georgiadis says the new operation is separate from the venture capital side and is an extension of the corporate finance work Apax already provides to smaller companies, private or quoted. Further hirings are sought. "We may well be the first corporate finance boutique to be set up in market-making," he says.

☐ *SOMETHING of an action replay for Guy Feld, who has arrived back at Teather & Greenwood to run the smaller companies side after he left there a couple of years ago for UBS. Feld, who also specialises in football stocks, is already notorious in this column for the study he once published explaining what a hopeless shower Tottenham Hotspur were — with not a mention of his lifelong addiction to Arsenal.*

Polls apart

THE rich are indeed different: estate agent Drivers Jonas moved to Mayfair last year and polled neighbours about the pros and cons of the area. Some of the latter include "noise pollution from bagpipes at Dickens & Jones" and "Shepherd Market, and the type of person you meet there, like prostitutes", although fortunately "the upper class type, of course". But the biggest drawback was the awful traffic. "My chauffeur can never get me anywhere on time," complained one neighbour. The heart bleeds.

☐ *THE bargain of a lifetime from a swanky West End boutique, offering the big names, Versace, Yves St Laurent, Moschino at "wholesale prices, 80 per cent to 300 per cent off retail prices". What, 300 per cent off? Do they pay you to take it away?*

Almost Blue

I HEAR of a small boulder in the path of the planned marriage between Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand. Not the European Commission, which is dithering but is not expected to put up much opposition. The difficulty the number-crunchers are having is in finding a suitable name. An early shot at Price Waterhouse Coopers was rejected in America, home of the Lybrand bit. So consultants Siegel & Gale have been called in, for the usual silly fee.

At least the failed merger of KPMG and Ernst & Young had agreed a provisional name, even if it threatened to make the firm a global laughing stock. In a subtle reference to KPMG's letterhead, it seems that they had already settled on Blue Box. Strange but true.

MARTIN WALLER

Gin maker learns from bitter experience

Dominic Walsh reports on how a once mighty brand got a new lease of life

January 27, 1998, is a date that will be forever etched in the memory of Charles Rolls, the former management consultant at Bain & Co, who became managing director of Plymouth Gin ten months earlier. That was the day Jilly Goolden of the BBC's *Food & Drink* programme rated Plymouth the top gin in a taste test, sending UK sales soaring 500 per cent.

That endorsement was just the break that Mr Rolls needed as he sought to revive a brand that had once supplied 1,000 barrels a year to the Royal Navy but had fallen from grace through several changes of ownership to the point where it was in danger of sinking without trace.

Its decline can be traced back to 1975, when it was acquired by Whitbread. By the time Whitbread sold its spirits business to Allied Domecq in 1991, sales of Plymouth Gin had declined from 150,000 cases a year to just 50,000, and the situation went from bad to worse when Allied downgraded the base spirit from grain neutral to cane spirit, cutting its strength from 40 per cent ABV (alcohol by volume) to just 37.5 per cent.

In 1996, Allied finally called it a day, selling out to a consortium of investors, including Richard Koch, the entrepreneur behind Filofax, and John Murphy, founder and chairman of Interbrand, the leading branding and marketing consultancy. The third investor was Fred Van Woerkom, a businessman with spirits distribution interests in The Netherlands.



Rolls: restored traditions

But even after its return to independent ownership the brand's problems were far from over and initial attempts to revive its fortunes met with abject failure. Mr Rolls, who was brought in as an equal shareholder by the other three investors, said: "The brand was in a terrible state. All the money the investors had put in — some £350,000 in working capital — had been burnt up; we inherited a patchwork quilt of distribution agreements and unviable deals; and we had no presence in America, where people told us the label and the bottle simply weren't good enough."

Mr Rolls, in consultation with Interbrand, immediately set about revamping the packaging to produce a more traditional feel in keeping with the gin's 200-year history. He opted for the original clear bottle and cork stopper and put the *Mayflower* on the label. This harks back to the Pilgrim Fathers, who are reputed to have spent their last night in England in the buildings in which Plymouth Gin has been distilled since 1793. The site's previous role as a Dominican priory is reflected by the resurrection of the monk that once adorned the label.

In his pursuit of new marketing avenues, Mr Rolls has not been slow to tap into a host of other historical connections. One of the most compelling is its link with the Navy, whose officers adopted the gin in the early 19th century, taking it to ports throughout the world. One of Mr Rolls's favourite stories is from the Second World War. Legend has it that the turning point in the war came when the Navy thought the Plymouth Gin distillery had been destroyed by Nazi bombers. Although untrue, the story is said to have enraged the Navy who, according to the company's marketing spiel, "upped their game and from then on Hitler never stood a chance".



Plymouth Gin's historical association with the Royal Navy was reinforced during the Falklands conflict

During the siege of Malta, every gunner in the garrison who shot down an enemy aircraft or contributed to the sinking of a ship received a bottle as a reward — a tradition resurrected in the Falklands conflict when three cases were dispatched to the Navy. It was also the Navy that brought the world the Pink Gin — a name Plymouth Gin still owns — when naval surgeons used the gin to make medicinal angostura bitters more palatable to sailors suffering with anything from indigestion to depression.

Of equal urgency was the need to refinance the business — which all four partners took part in — and sort out distribution. Before Christmas the company was turning over £1 million (excluding duty) while losing £25,000 a month, but the last two months have seen it make a small profit as overseas distribution operations have come on stream and UK sales have soared. Last year the brand sold 16,500 cases, but this year Mr Rolls is forecasting 35,000.

In the UK, the breakthrough came when Rémy, the French spirits giant, agreed to take on its entire UK distribution from March 1. Suddenly, multiples such as Asda and Booker were willing to take the brand nationwide, and Tesco has agreed to sell it in 250 stores. Rémy will also handle Canadian distribution, and an agreement that has just been signed with Todhunter Imports, the US group, will see Plymouth Gin launched across America on May 1.

"We're really focused on the US and UK at the moment," said Mr Rolls. "If we get those right, the rest of the world will follow."

The rejuvenation of Plymouth Gin — allied to Diageo's recent sale of Bombay Gin to Bacardi for a hefty price — has also ignited interest from potential suitors. "We've had a UK brewer approach us with a view to taking a significant stake, but it would be inappropriate at the moment," said Mr Rolls.

"But there will come a time, within two years, when we have to either accept our position as a niche single-product company, accept an offer from one of the larger companies or seek money from the market to launch us into the next phase."

Mr Rolls admitted that his own preference would be for a flotation, and he has already had preliminary talks with Greig Middleton, the broker. "I'm having too good a time to want to change this."

How would you make money on your house without selling it?

(a) Open the gardens up to the public?

(b) Convert your garage into a theme park?

(c) Rent the box room to a South American fugitive?

(d) Re-mortgage with a Virgin One account?

Your home is usually the most valuable thing you possess, but if it goes up in value the only way you can get your hands on your profit is by selling it. Not only is this a lot of hassle, but even when you've done it you still have to buy another place to live so the money you've made just goes into your next home. With the Virgin *One* account you can get hold of that money whenever you want. No meetings, no forms. You just write a cheque. And whatever you want to spend the money on, you pay the same competitive rate of interest as your mortgage.

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Autocrat who is seen as the driving force at British Biotech

Keith McCullagh, the founder of British Biotech, and Chris Evans, the founder of Chiroscience, are probably the two best-known figures in the UK's biotechnology sector, but they have enjoyed very different weeks.

While Dr Evans has seen *The Sunday Times* estimate of his wealth rise to £75 million and received the Society of Chemical Industry's Centenary Medal, Dr McCullagh's reputation has suffered in the face of a series of damaging disclosures.

Dr Evans took the opportunity to twist the knife at the SCI award dinner, joking that Dr McCullagh had been visiting the US to raise some money: the biggest fund managers were not receptive. "I would not give you any more money if you were the last stock trading on earth," a shocked Dr McCullagh was told. He swallowed, and turned to Malcolm Fallen, his finance director, and said: "Put him down as slightly doubtful."

The explosion of laughter from the audience, many of whom knew Dr McCullagh, was prompted by more than a good joke well told. It recognised an essential truth.

Ask anybody about Dr McCullagh and they will quickly tell you about his ebullient optimism, particularly in the prospects for British Biotech and its cancer and pancreatitis drugs. So great did these seem a couple of years ago that the Oxford company was valued at almost £2 billion, in spite of huge annual losses. Analysts dazzled by the apparently impressive results of marimastat, the cancer drug, suggested that it had a 90 per cent chance of reaching the market. This was an extraordinary remark to make based on early stage trials that relied on enzyme markers, data that British Biotech admitted would not be acceptable for regulatory approval.

Rival biotech firms have long privately criticised British Biotech for doing too little to dampen down the optimism. But this week's revelations are more worrying since they suggest a general unwillingness to disclose bad news about its drug programmes. Two obvious examples are the company's failure to disclose that, as along ago as last May, the European Medicines Evaluation Agency had said it had "major objections" to giving approval to Zacutex, the pancreatitis drug; and its decision to disclose an ongoing Securities and Exchange Commission investigation only in a US document.

In his rare media interviews, Dr McCullagh is given to making visionary statements: "I have wanted to create a big pharmaceuticals company from the day the business started ... We were always clear the goal was to be the pre-eminent biotechnology company in Britain ... British Biotech is now the industry leader in Europe. Investment in the industry in the future will be largely determined by our success or failure."

Possibly because of his doubt-free confidence, he has been advised to shelter behind Katie Arber, his ever-loyal spokeswoman. This has allowed the company to elude difficult questions about its evolving strategy — and the full explanation for the extension of pancreatitis trials last July.

Dr McCullagh actually trained as a vet. Four years as a research scientist in the US in the early 1970s imbued him with a sense that wealth creation was not only a worthwhile goal but perhaps the most important one. After six years lecturing on veterinary pathology at Bristol University, he was recruited to be head of biology for the UK arm of GD Searle — a breeding ground for the future leaders of the UK biotech industry — by Peter Fellner, now chief executive of Celltech. When Monsanto acquired Searle and shut down its UK research arm, Dr McCullagh set up his own company.

Although he founded British Biotech with Sir Brian Richards (also ex-Searle), he has for years been the driving force. He is known as an autocrat who dominates weaker colleagues while causing endless rows with those prepared to stand up to him — men such as Andrew Millar, fired last Monday as director of clinical research.

According to one insider, the problems with another cancer drug in 1995 created a "poisonous atmosphere", with stand-up rows around the boardroom table. John Raisman, then newly appointed as chairman, was sufficiently worried to confront James Noble, finance director, Peter Lewis, research and development director, and John Gordon, head of the Neures arm. But when they told him of the difficulties of working with Dr McCullagh, Mr Raisman told them: "It's either you three or him." All three have since left.

Mr Raisman is not alone: to many people Keith McCullagh *is* British Biotech. One analyst has said: "You do get the impression that Keith is the only person who will last forever at the company." After the last week, that looks a bold assumption.

PAUL DURMAN



DR KEITH MCCULLAGH

Born: Hammersmith on November 30, 1943
Education: Veterinary medicine at Bristol University
Career: After four years in research in the US, returned to lecture at Bristol University in 1974. Joined GD Searle in 1980, leaving to set up British Biotechnology in 1986, which floated in 1992. Paid £419,000 in 1996-97.
Last November, he has appointed to head Government's working group on high technology companies.

IN THE HOT SEAT

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الاصل

STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Asda's cautious trading mood sends shares lower

A WEEK can be a long time in the stock market. Last week, City investors were willing to pay 218p for **Asda**, the supermarket chain. In fact, they could *not* get enough of them.

This week they have been giving them the cold shoulder with the price falling a further 2½p to 192½p yesterday after a series of meetings between the company and various brokers.

Talk on the street suggests the group has been in cautious mood about current trading. As Tesco pointed out this week, consumers are becoming more price-conscious. This is likely to lead to price cuts, increased competition and narrower margins.

At the same time, the other supermarket chains have come under pressure after some bearish comments from John Lewis which, apparently, saw a 10 per cent decline in food sales during the week after Easter.

J Sainsbury fell 7p to 472p with **Tesco** 10p lower at 553p, **Somerfield** 9p to 338½p and **Safeway** 1p to 353½p.

The rest of the equity market was again beating a ragged retreat although prices managed to close above their worst levels. Brokers said the bears had gained the upper hand this week, providing the signal for widespread profit-taking, especially in the financial sector.

At one stage the FTSE 100 index was down 112.4, but rallied with the weaker than expected GDP rising 0.4 and stretching the year-on-year increase to 2.8 per cent.

By the time the Dow Jones industrial average opened lower again in New York, the London market was looking decidedly tired. The index closed 34.2 down at 5,863.9, a loss on the week of 58.3. By contrast, the fall in the FTSE 250 index was just 4.1 at 5,600.3. Total turnover was 864 million shares.

Among financials **Commercial Union** dropped 50p to £10.70, **Lloyds TSB** 32½p to 937p, **Norwich Union** 13p to 449½p, **General Accident** 40p to £13.87, **Prudential** 22p to 790p, **Guardian Royal Exchange** 11p to 407p and **Woolwich** 8½p to 335p.

Argos climbed 37p to 645p after conceding defeat to rival Great Universal Stores in the £1.9 billion battle for control of the catalogue retailer. **GUS**, up 46p at 856p, received acceptances of 58 per cent of the issued share capital for its offer of worth 650p a share.



Bearish comments have put supermarkets under pressure

Diageo climbed 31½p to 721p after announcing plans to sell or close six brands from among its bourbons, brandies and rums.

New valuations are now being put on international spirit brands after the recent sale of Diageo's Dewar's scotch whisky brand to Bacardi for £800 million before hefty write-offs relating to the disposal of British Shoe.

Crédit Lyonnais, the broker, took its toll of the biotech companies with a bearish report on the sector that left few of them unscathed. Steve Abbott, who covers the sector for Laing, said valuations needed to come down to earth.

British Biotech, which sacked its research director to be bid for at this time. **Cadcentre** came under renewed selling pressure in the wake of Wednesday's profits warning with the price dropping a further 20p to 246½p.

Calluna accelerated in late trading adding 1¼p to 22½p on turnover of 8.5 million shares. Colin Blackbourne of Shore Capital emerged with a million shares under his belt this week which could spark a wave of buying by his supporters. He is excited about prospects for the group which has developed a process for detecting computer viruses.

The prospect of an all-out bid battle put **Vero Group** in the frame with a rise of 17½p to 170p. Just a day after Applied Power offered 157p a share, Pentair Inc enters the fray by announcing that it is prepared to make its own offer that would be at a premium to the 157p already on the table.

The agreed bid for **British Dredging** put 7p on the shares at 191½p. Grafton Group is offering 194p a share valuing the company at £35.3 million.

La Senza has received a bid approach. But as the troubled lingerie supplier was quick to point out, any offer is likely to be at a discount to the current ruling market price, down 10p at 12½p.

Continuing bid hopes drove **Aspen Group** 15p higher to 110p. Photobition may have thrown in its hand earlier this week, but City speculators remain confident that abother suitor may soon emerge.

Burnden Leisure, which owns Premier League side Bolton Wanderers, dropped 2½p to a new low of 14p as the team faced up to the prospect of life in the Nationwide First Division next season.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Bond prices rallied from opening losses to close virtually all-square. Weak economic numbers from Germany were blamed on opening falls, but the absence of any real selling enabled prices to recover their poise in thin trading.

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt finished £¼ better at £108²⁵⁄₃₂, while in the conventional market Treasury 7 per cent 2007 rose £⁵⁄₁₆ to close at £110½.

NEW YORK: Stocks fell at midday with the Dow Jones industrial average down 66.51 points, at 9,076.82, as a cautious mood took hold of the market after a run-up to record highs earlier in the week.

Carlton Communications rose 17p to 478p in a falling market with almost 6 million shares traded. Carlton gave a rundown to fund managers at a presentation arranged by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker. It remains upbeat about prospects for digital television. DKB continues to rate Carlton a "buy".

Highland Distilleries, of Famous Grouse fame, has seen its price come up from the 260p level in the past few weeks despite disappointing profit numbers. The price closed 2p easier at 320½p.

Sears softened 3p to 58¼p as Morgan Stanley, the US securities house, reiterated its bearish view of the shares ahead of final results on Tuesday. Brokers are forecasting that profits will more than halve at about £40 million, this week, touched 45p before rallying to finish all square at 50p. But there were losses for **Chiroscience**, 7p to 309p, **Cambridge Antibody Technology**, 12½p to 295p, **Celltech**, 7½p to 312½p, and **Cortecs**, 2p to 170½p.

Bid talks have collapsed at AIM-listed **IOC International** leaving the shares 13p lower at 101½p. The fibre optics specialist said it would not have been in the best interest of shareholders for the company

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
SmithKline Beecham	677p	—44p	First-quarter results
Commercial Union	£10.70	—166p	Rising flood claims
Home Counties News	560p	+115p	Eastern Counties bids 560p
Yates Brothers	481p	+43½p	Jim Slater tip
Rank Group	378p	—26p	Trading update
British Petroleum	915p	+28½p	Strong Exxon results
Pilkington	127½	+12½p	Brokers' recommendations
Cadcentre Group	248½p	—158½p	Profits warning
IOC International	101½p	—35p	Bid talks terminated

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones .... 9076.82 (-66.51)
S&P Composite .... 1111.54 (-9.04)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average .... 16011.24 (+249.55)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng .... 10879.93 (-39.01)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index .... 1166.74 (-4.31)

Sydney:
AO .... 2854.9 (-22.9)

Frankfurt:
DAX .... 5144.28 (-107.19)

Singapore:
Straits .... 1491.28 (-4.59)

Brussels:
General .... 18375.37 (-82.86)

Paris:
CAC-40 .... 3783.34 (-38.79)

Zurich:
SKA Gen .... 1509.40 (-6.40)

London:
FT 30 .... 3768.4 (-13.0)
FTSE 100 .... 5863.9 (-34.2)
FTSE 250 .... 5600.3 (-4.1)
FTSE 350 .... 2832.9 (-13.7)
FTSE Eurotop 100 .... 2738.12 (-29.97)
FTSE All-Share .... 2764.67 (-12.42)
FTSE Non Financials .... 2758.37 (-2.86)
FTSE Fixed Interest .... 141.88 (+0.02)
FTSE Govt Secs .... 105.01 (+0.31)
Bargains 64222
SEAQ Volume 865.8m
US$ .... 1.6673 (+0.0023)
German Mark .... 2.9923 (-0.0022)
Exchange Index .... 105.9 (Same)
Bank of England official close (4pm)
£:ECU 1.5172
£:SDR 1.2349
RPI .... 160.8 Mar (3.5%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX .... 158.9 Mar (2.6%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

AB Airlines	93½	...
ARM Hldgs (575)	830	- 5
Aberdeen Cnvtble C	99½	...
Advent 2 VCT	102	...
Desire Petroleum	139	+ 6½
Do 85% Cnv Ln 2005	111	...
Do Zero Div Prf	103½	...
Eurotunnel 01/03 Wts	5	...
Hartford Grp	2¼	...
INVESCO Grd Opps	106½	...
LLP Group	333½	...
Microcap Growth Tst	52½	...
Murray VCT 3 (100)	97½	...
Ottakar's	231	- 3½
Oxford Glycoscnes	316	+ 1½
Quester VCT 2	90	...
Transport Dev B	34½	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Guinness Pt n/p (20)	11½	...
Memory Crp n/p (20)	12½	- ½
Mon Oil Gas n/p (55)	9¼	- ¼
Radstone Tch n/p (40)	14½	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Aspen Gp	110p (+15p)
Vero	170p (+17½p)
Dennis	322½p (+29p)
Argos	645p (+37p)
Rolls-Royce	291½p (+16p)
Real Time	462½p (+25p)
GUS	856p (+42p)
Oxford Inst	321½p (+14p)
Carlton Comm	478p (+17p)
Kewill Sys	880p (+28½p)
Rio Tinto	893p (+28p)
Delphi	751p (+18½p)
Laporte	796p (+15p)

FALLS:

Rolfe & Nolan	330p (-45p)
Acorn	162p (-10½p)
Imperial Tob	418p (-21½p)
Scot & New	867p (-38p)
Lloyds TSB	937p (-32½p)
Blacks Leis	363½p (-12p)
Northern Rock	609p (-19½p)
Norwich Union	449½p (-13p)
Prudential	790p (-22p)
GRE	407p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 26

TEMPUS

Fair weather friends

INVESTORS in Centrica have enjoyed a comfortable ride since the break-up of British Gas. Those who remained loyal in the face of dire warnings from the City about the company's bleak prospects were rewarded with a rise in the shares from a low of 56p in late 1997 to 116p earlier this year.

But bears of the stock have never been far from the scene and yesterday provided plenty of ammunition for their cause. After the mild winter a profit warning was inevitable and the resulting lower gas prices have already been factored into profit forecasts.

But the trading statement, duly announced at the company's annual meeting yesterday, coincided with an update from Clare Spottiswoode, the industry regulator, on the progress of the competitive gas market. With a further 3.5 million homes in the West Midlands, Wiltshire and Wales coming on stream yesterday, a clearer picture is emerging of the share of the market being won by independent suppliers, which stands at about 17.5 per cent. A good time for profit-taking, surely.

But Centrica has never been a share for short-term speculators and continued loyalty will bring further rewards.

No company enjoys seeing the loss of market share to rival upstarts, but the surprise is that more customers have not defected from Centrica. Thus far the company has been severely restricted in its effort to compete with discounted gas being offered by the newcomers. But the ties are being loosened and Centrica will prove a formidable rival. Already it is proving adept at holding up the promise of cheap dual power packages for when the electricity market is open to competition.

Stakis

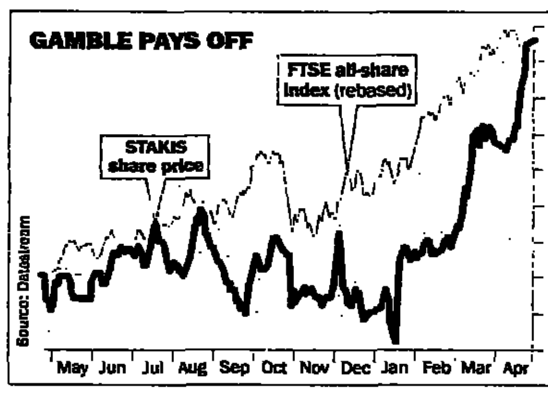
DAVID MICHELS has won deserved plaudits since he became chief executive of Stakis in 1991, not least for the skilful way he turned the company back from the brink of disaster. He is also regarded as one of the industry's straightest talkers.

But it has become clear that he is also not averse to being ever-so-slightly disingenuous when it serves his purposes. Through much of last year, for example, he warned that the group's troubled casino division would be sold if its problems could not be promptly sorted out.

He must have already known that the steps he had put in place, including new management, cost controls and staff retraining, were a pretty sure bet. The proof is contained in yesterday's second-quarter trading update: spend per head, attendances and gaming win are all on the rise.

The only blackspot is the rise in gaming duty announced in the Budget, which may be exacerbated if efforts by London's casinos to pass more of the pain on to provincial players are successful. But the effect is still relatively minor, and observers believe it may prompt the Government to hasten further deregulation.

With hotel returns improving and health clubs proving a lucrative third leg, the rally in Stakis's shares looks well founded. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson believes it deserves, at the very least, a share price of 147p, against yesterday's close of 133p.



Ted Baker

TED BAKER is still best known as a shirtmaker, but since its flotation last year the company has continued to branch out into different areas — children's wear, women's wear, and now even skincare. In doing so, it has positioned itself well, as high quality and fashionable, but not at all outlandish.

There is certainly scope for the business to do well abroad. Although it could, the retail network is not being allowed to grow willy-nilly, so keeping a lid on costs; and a tight control is being kept on who stocks Ted Baker goods, to make sure they are sold in the right environment.

There is always a considerable risk in any fashion business. By their very nature they tend to come and go and to fall out of favour very abruptly. Morover, small mistakes made with design early in the production process can be extremely difficult to put right, and a bad collection can ruin a label's good name.

That said, Ted Baker is clever in relying on a certain look, with classy fabrics and unusual colours. As long as the designers do not suddenly feel the need to surprise, and probably frighten off, the customers, the scope is there for the label to take off internationally. Hold.

Tring

WHILE most of us have enjoyed the bull market over the last four years shareholders in Tring International, the cut-price CD supplier floated in 1994, have endured a darker side of the boom.

Plot a graph of Tring's share price on the same piece of paper as a line showing the performance of the stock market average and you will see the lines move, consistently and, from the word go, in opposite directions.

Tring's objective was plausible enough. The company came to market just as demand for CDs was taking off. As a cut-price supplier it could reasonably expect to make hay as music lovers rebuilt their collections by buying new CDs to replace their vinyl favourites.

But anything that could go wrong did. Tring found itself fighting legal actions left, right and centre. It encountered production and distribution difficulties. The founder directors fell out. Export markets were decimated by the soaring pound.

Now, under chief executive Philip Robinson, the founder who won the tussle for control after locking horns with former partner Mark Frey, Tring may stabilise. The two-for-five rights issue at 6½p and the Bank of New York arrangements may even give Tring the sufficient financial strength to improve.

Wish it luck but do not feel obliged to provide financial support yourself. This is a company, and share issue, investors can safely ignore.

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

May	1072-1071	Jul	1178-1175
Jul	1091-1090	Sep	1193-1189
Sep	1110-1109	Dec	unq
Dec	1129-1127		
Mar	1149-1147		
May	1163-1160		Volume: 4130

ROBUSTA COFFEE (\$)

May	1775 BID	Jan	1610 BID
Jul	1710 BID	Mar	1630 BID
Sep	unq	May	1575-1560
Nov	1645-1635		Volume: 13213

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Mar	267.6-67.2
Spot: 251.5		May	272.6-71.2
Aug	252.0-51.7	Aug	278.6-75.0
Oct	257.9-57.5	Oct	284.6-78.0
Dec	262.1-61.7		Volume: 1020

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on April 23

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	70.10	89.27	86.35
(+/-)	-4.45	-13.98	-2.35
Eng/Wales:	70.10	102.18	86.01
(+/-)	-4.45	-9.48	-2.57
(%)	+1.0	-16.0	+1.0
Scotland:	unq	89.79	92.27
(+/-)	—	-10.80	-1.41
(%)	—	-43.0	+2.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	13.30	-0.10
Brent 15 day (Jun)	13.95	-0.10
Brent 15 day (Jul)	14.30	-0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	15.20	-0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Jul)	15.70	-0.10

PRODUCTS (\$/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	158 (-3)	161 (-3)
Gasoil EEC	135 (n/c)	137 (n/c)
3.5 Fuel Oil	76 (-5)	79 (-4)
Naphtha	125 (-1)	127 (-1)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

May	132.50-32.75	Aug	138.75-39.00
Jun	134.25-34.50	Sep	141.50-41.75
Jul	136.25-36.50		Vol: 13031

BRENT (6.00pm)

Jun	13.98-13.99	Sep	14.87 BID
Jul	14.30-14.34	Oct	15.12 BID
Aug	14.60 BID		Vol: 36995

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
May	76.90	May	74.00
Jul	79.00	Sep	73.50
Sep	76.25	Nov	75.50
Nov	78.25	Jan	77.50
Jan	80.25	Mar	79.50
Volume: 350		Volume: 55	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
May	95.1	95.0
Jun	unq	90.0
Nov		74.0
		Volume: 43

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
May 48.25-48.75

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd \$10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Apr 98	1010	1010	1010
May 98	1000	985	1000
Jun 98	unq	—	970
Jul 98	930	930	930
Vol: 29 lots		Open Interest: 1462	

Index 1011 +5

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day) — Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)	1870.0-1871.0	1884.0-1884.5	1858475
Lead (\$/tonne)	566.00-567.00	577.50-578.00	158900
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)	1100.5-1101.5	1127.0-1127.5	354675
Tin (\$/tonne)	5825.0-5830.0	5730.0-5735.0	42735
Aluminium Hi Gde (\$/tonne)	1450.0-1450.5	1474.5-1475.0	1702275
Nickel (\$/tonne)	5485.0-5490.0	5585.0-5590.0	71244

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Calls Jan	Puts Jul	Puts Oct	Puts Jan
ASDA	180	21	27	33	6	11	11½
(*193)	200	10½	17	23½	15	20	21
Abbey Nat	1100	108½	140½	175½	48	74	92½
(*1140½)	1150	83	116	151	73	98	116½
Al&Leic	800	73½	98	115½	34	51	62½
(*827)	850	48½	72	90½	59	75	86½
Alld Dom	600	51	69½	77½	22½	34½	43
(*626)	650	29	45	53½	49½	60½	69
BAA	600	40	56	67½	28	34	41
(*612½)	650	17	32½	44½	56½	61½	68
BAT Ind	550	50½	67½	82½	30½	47½	51½
(*564)	600	29½	46½	60	56½	72½	79
Barclays	1700	152½	209½	259½	68½	111	134½
(*1758)	1800	101½	159½	210	117½	158½	183
Bass	1069	88	115	—	52½	62½	—
(*1096)	1100	72½	99	112	67½	77	91
Boots	900	68½	94	114½	39	52½	80
(*931½)	950	44½	70½	88½	62	73	84
Br Airways	600	45½	68	82½	33½	45½	55
(*614)	650	25	46	60½	61½	74	82½
BP	900	70	97	113	39½	66½	73½
(*914)	950	47	75	88½	65	92	99
Br Steel	140	21	23½	25½	6	7½	11½
(*157½)	160	9	13	17	16	17½	21½
C&W	650	66	64½	105	26	41½	52
(*679½)	700	40½	60½	80½	49½	65	76½
CU	1050	87½	120½	141½	48½	78½	86½
(*1069½)	1100	61½	95½	116	73	97½	111
GlaxoW	1500	150½	200½	240	61	105	120½
(*1560½)	1600	103	151	189½	109	154	169½
HSBC	1800	177	239	291	96½	147½	171½
(*1853)	1900	128	191	243	147	197	221½
Halifax	800	66½	89½	111	32	49	54
(*825½)	850	41½	63½	85½	56½	68½	77½
ICI	1050	87	119	147	36	61½	74½
(*1084½)	1100	60½	93½	121½	60½	85½	98½
Land Sec	1000	77	109	124	36½	55	60
(*1041½)	1050	49	83½	97½	61	79	83½
M&S	560	34½	51½	64	27	35	38½
(*561)	600	16	32½	42	55½	61	66½
Natl Pwr	550	43	61½	73½	19	46	55
(*558)	600	23½	42	54	49½	76½	85
Nat West	1100	108½	142½	171½	50	82	93½
(*1140)	1150	83	117½	147	74	106½	118
Reed Intl	550	60½	76	90½	17½	26½	31½
(*588½)	600	32½	49	65	39½	48	55
Reuters	645	57	77½	—	35	46½	—
(*657½)	703	31½	52½	—	68	78½	—
R&Sun	650	80	99½	116½	35	43½	[illegible]
(*[illegible])	700	52	73½	93½	42	58½	67½
Safeway	330	28½	42½	49½	15	23	28
(*349½)	360	15	28½	35½	30½	39	43½
Sainsbury	460	26	46	57½	23½	34½	39½
(*469)	500	12½	29	40½	47½	55½	62
Shell	420	25½	48	57½	14	22	26
(*436)	460	16½	29	38	33½	42	46
SmKl Bch	650	72	101	120	36	53½	64
(*675)	700	48½	77½	97	61½	77½	89
Std Char	900	92	132	164	87	95	113½
(*912½)	950	68	108	141½	93	121	140
Thames W	950	58	78½	98½	52	61	70
(*956)	1000	37	58½	76½	82	90½	99
Vodafone	600	71	94	108½	27½	39	47
(*637)	650	46	68½	84½	50	63½	71½
Woolwich	324	29½	36½	—	16	23	—
(*331½)	354	16½	23	—	33	39½	—
Zeneca	2400	220	294	361	81½	137	163
(*2496)	2500	165	243	310½	127	184	209½

	Series	Calls May	Calls Aug	Calls Nov	Puts May	Puts Aug	Puts Nov
BTR	200	10	21	26	8	15½	20½
(*201½)	220	3	12½	18	21	27½	32
Blue Circ	330	30½	47½	55½	5	18	24
(*352½)	360	13½	31	41	17½	32	38½
Br Aero	1900	99½	185	239	38	91½	121½
(*1953)	2000	48½	134	188½	86½	140	172
Br Telcm	650	25	50	66½	18	39½	51
(*653)	700	7½	28½	45½	50½	68	79½
Cadbury	800	42	80	95	16	37	46½
(*821)	850	18	55½	70½	41	62	70½
Carlton Cms	460	26	42½	59	9½	26	35½
(*474)	500	8	25	41½	31½	46½	54½
Energy Gp	850	20½	39½	21	3	8½	10
(*866)	900	6½	4½	4	34	39½	38½
Gallaher	330	13½	29	35	11½	22	31½
(*330)	360	3½	17	23	32	38	49½
GEC	460	39	56½	70½	5½	22½	29½
(*493)	500	15½	35	50½	21	41½	49

	Series	Calls May			Puts May		
Diageo	613	111	—	—	½	—	—
(*720½)	671	57½	—	—	6	—	—

	Series	Calls May	Calls Aug	Calls Nov	Puts May	Puts Aug	Puts Nov
Diageo	671	60	90½	—	7½	25½	—
(*720½)	725	25	57½	—	29	50½	—
Hanson	360	14	27½	36	10	20	27
(*362)	390	3½	14½	23	30	37½	43½
Imp Tob	420	26	38	49	5½	16	22½
(*439)	460	6½	20	30½	25	37½	43½
Kingfshr	1100	41	87½	111½	31½	57½	70
(*1104½)	1150	20	64	86½	60	82½	95½
Lasmo	240	16½	30	37½	4½	12½	14
(*252)	260	6	20	27½	13	20	23½
Ladbroke	330	20	37	45½	7½	19½	25½
(*340½)	360	6½	23½	31½	25	35½	41½
LucasVar	260	9½	21½	29½	10½	20	22½
(*261)	280	2½	13½	20½	23½	31½	34
P&O	850	50½	81½	94½	9½	27½	40½
(*887)	900	21	53	67	30½	50	63
Prudentl	750	64	103½	122½	12½	35½	48
(*795)	800	35½	77½	98	33	58½	72
Rio Tinto	850	58	98	122½	15	38½	58½
(*890½)	900	28½	71	97½	36	62	82½
Redland	330	15½	16½	—	½	1	—
(*345)	360	½	0½	—	15½	15½	—
R-Royce	280	13½	27½	37½	9½	18	26
(*285)	300	5½	19	28	21	29½	37
Tesco	500	50	65	79	2½	15	20½
(*549½)	550	14	35½	51	19	35½	42
Utd Bisc	240	9½	20	23	6½	12½	17
(*242)	260	2½	11½	15	19½	23	28½

	Series	Calls Jan	Calls Sep	Calls Dec	Puts Jan	Puts Sep	Puts Dec
BG	283	27½	—	—	7	—	—
(*302½)	306	15	—	—	18½	—	—
BSkyB	420	33½	49½	61½	16½	27	35
(*433½)	460	16	31½	44	37½	47½	55
Br Bio	50	8½	13	16½	7	9	11½
(*50½)	60	5	9½	13	12½	15	18
Centrica	100	10	14½	18	3½	6	8½
(*105½)	110	5	9½	13½	8	12½	11½
Dixons	550	53½	72	90½	13	26½	30½
(*580)	600	25½	45½	65½	34½	50	54
EMI	460	52½	63½	76½	17½	35½	41
(*486)	500	32½	44	57½	36½	56	61½
Granada	1000	75½	107½	132½	22½	43½	53½
(*1044)	1050	47	81	106½	42½	65½	77
GUS	800	75½	106	118½	17	30½	42
(*854½)	850	44	77½	92	37	51	64½
Lloyds TSB	900	75½	111	141	34½	62	80
(*930½)	950	50	86½	117	59	86½	105
Lonrho	100	10	13	—	3	6	—
(*107)	110	5	8	—	7½	10½	—
Norwich	420	45½	61½	70½	11	20	26
(*449)	460	24	40	51	27½	38½	45
Orange	390	43	58½	71½	13½	23½	31
(*414)	420	26½	44	57½	26½	38	45½
Railtrack	1000	63	95½	119½	48	69½	90
(*1006½)	1050	41½	73	96½	75½	87	118½
Scot Pwr	550	33	53	66	31	41½	48
(*554½)	600	14½	31½	45½	64	72½	77½
Tarmac	110	10	14½	16½	3	5½	8
(*116½)	120	5	9½	11½	7½	10	12½
Tomkins	330	36	43½	49½	[illegible]	12	14½
(*358)	360	16½	25½	33½	14½	24	28
Unilever	600	41	64	78	17½	28½	37½
(*618½)	650	17½	40	52½	44	53½	62

April 24 Total: 21199 Calls: 12599 Puts: 8600

FTSE INDEX (*5843½)

Strike	Calls May	Calls Jun	Calls Jul	Calls Aug	Calls Dec	Puts May	Puts Jun	Puts Jul	Puts Aug	Puts Dec
5650	277½	373½	431½	484	—	65½	137	166½	195½	—
5700	240½	334	397	456	651½	79½	151	182½	217½	312½
5750	204	303½	366½	427½	—	93	170	201½	239	—
5800	172½	273	336½	399	588½	112	189	221	261	351
5850	143	245½	306½	370	—	133	209½	241	283	—
5900	114	214	276½	341	524	154½	229½	261½	305½	390
5950	90	184	246½	312	—	184	253	283	328½	—
6000	69½	162	224	288	461½	214	281½	311	356	433½

April 24 Total: 3216 Calls: 1662 Puts: 1554

*Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Jun 98	108-14	108-26	108-11	108-26	69454
Previous open interest 3	Sep 98				108-94	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 98	107.05	107.27	106.99	107.23	55759
Previous open interest 169518	Sep 98	106.83	106.83	106.82	106.95	65
Five Year Gilt	Jun 98	102.91	103.05	102.91	103.04	395
Previous open interest 10071	Sep 98				104.39	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Jun 98	118.73	118.89	118.63	118.83	19160
Previous open interest 136264	Sep 98				119.30	0
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Jun 98	130.75	130.82	130.62	130.82	1759
	Sep 98	130.70	130.75	130.70	130.77	85
Three Mth Sterling	Jun 98	92.57	92.59	92.55	92.58	31158
	Sep 98	92.70	92.75	92.70	92.75	35263
Previous open interest 893726	Dec 98	92.88	92.96	92.88	92.94	66052
Three Mth Euromark	Jun 98	96.290	96.295	96.280	96.285	31393
Previous open interest 2320224	Sep 98	96.150	96.160	96.130	96.140	60933
Three Mth Eurolira	Jun 98	95.35	95.36	95.31	95.32	31840
Previous open interest 987256	Sep 98	95.77	95.78	95.74	95.75	21583
Three Mth Euroswiss	Jun 98	98.43	98.45	98.38	98.39	14291
Previous open interest 150971	Sep 98	98.24	98.25	98.18	98.19	11063
Three Mth ECU	Jun 98	95.79	95.80	95.78	95.79	745
Previous open interest 47195	Sep 98	95.80	95.81	95.79	95.80	768
FTSE 100	Jun 98	5890.0	5933.0	5820.0	5890.0	20674
Previous open interest 162135	Sep 98				5965.0	0

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 8
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 7¼ Low 6½ Week fixed: 7⅛
Treasury Bills (Dis):Buy: 2 mth 7 ; 3 mth 7 . Sell: 2 mth 6³¹⁄₃₂ ; 3 mth 6³¹⁄₃₂ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	7⅛-7¼	7⅛-7¼	7⅛-7¼	7⅛-7¼	
Sterling Money Rates:	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7½-7⅜
Interbank:	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7½-7⅜
Overnight: open 7¼, close 6½ .					
Local Authority Deps:	7¼	n/a	7½	7½	7⅜
Sterling CDs:	7¼-7⅜	7¼-7⅜	7¼-7⅜	7¼-7⅜	7⅜-7½
Dollar CDs:	5.57	n/a	5.57	5.68	5.82
Building Society CDs:	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7½-7⅜

TREASURY BILLS: Applcts: £370m allotted: £100m; Bids: £98.255% received: 95%; Last week: £98.255% received: 64%. Avge rate: £6.9952% last wk £6.9913%; Next week: £100m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5¾-5⅝	5½-4½
Deutschemark:	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3¾-3⅝	4-3
French Franc:	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3¾-3⅝	3½-2½
Swiss Franc:	1⅜-1¼	1⅜-1¼	1⅜-1¼	1⅜-1¼	1½-½
Yen:	½-⅜	½-⅜	½-⅜	½-⅜	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open \$313.30-313.70 Close: \$312.60-313.10 High: \$313.40-313.90
Low: \$312.50-313.00 AM: \$312.65 PM: \$313.15

Krugerrand: \$314.00-316.00 (£189.00-191.00)

Platinum: \$409.00 (£244.90) Silver: \$6.255 (£3.765) Palladium: \$383.00 (£229.35)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for April 24	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.3643-3.3748	3.3643-3.3669	1½-1pr	3½-3pr
Brussels	61.680-61.920	61.742-61.794	21-16pr	60-52pr
Copenhagen	11.404-11.441	11.408-11.417	¾-½pr	1¾-½pr
Dublin	1.1832-1.1906	1.1848-1.1870	13-6pr	44-34pr
Frankfurt	2.9900-2.9987	2.9905-2.9929	⅞-¾pr	2⅛-2pr
Lisbon	306.31-307.19	306.37-306.69	⅝-⅜pr	⅝-⅜pr
Madrid	253.97-254.60	253.99-254.28	64-53pr	200-181pr
Milan	2954.9-2958.9	2954.9-2958.9	43-27pr	180-157pr
Montreal	2.3915-2.3978	2.3920-2.3940	0.51-0.45pr	1.03-0.95pr
New York	1.6654-1.6680	1.6660-1.6668	0.248-0.227pr	0.72-0.69pr
Oslo	12.427-12.461	12.427-12.436	¾-½pr	1-½pr
Paris	10.021-10.054	10.027-10.035	⅞-⅝pr	⅞-⅝pr
Stockholm	12.828-12.866	12.828-12.843	⅞-⅝pr	⅞-⅝pr
Tokyo	216.15-218.48	218.21-218.48	1½-1⅜pr	3¾-3⅝pr
Vienna	21.037-21.098	21.0408-21.058	⅞-⅝pr	2-1½pr
Zurich	2.4810-2.4920	2.4893-2.4920	1½-1⅜pr	3⅝-3½pr

Source: Extel — Premium = pr. Discount = ds.

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5363-1.5375
Austria	12.63-12.64
Belgium (Com)	37.06-37.10
Canada	1.4360-1.4370
Denmark	6.8526-6.8546
France	6.0232-6.0242
Germany	1.8960-1.7965
Hong Kong	7.7497-7.7500
Ireland	1.4034-1.4054
Italy	1774.0-1775.0
Japan	130.32-130.42
Malaysia	3.7384-3.7884
Netherlands	2.0211-2.0216
Norway	7.4693-7.4796
Portugal	183.87-184.01
Singapore	1.5880-1.5900
Spain	152.51-152.55
Sweden	7.7111-7.7211
Switzerland	1.4941-1.4951

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6650-1.6670
Australia dollar	2.5568-2.5611
Bahrain dinar	0.6205-0.6345
Brazil real*	1.8994-1.9023
China yuan	13.645-13.954
Cyprus pound	0.8670-0.8870
Finland markka	9.0175-9.1665
Greece drachma	515.00-527.10
Hong Kong dollar	12.9033-12.9115
India rupee	65.37-66.87
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.5015-0.5145
Malaysia ringgit	6.2244-6.3115
New Zealand dollar	2.9706-2.9761
Pakistan rupee	71.85 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9950-6.1320
Singapore dollar	2.6439-2.6489
S Africa rand (com)	8.3290-8.5160
U A E dirham	6.0475-6.1855

Barclays Treasury • Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	1,716	LASMO	882
ASDA Gp	11,955	Legal & Gn	987
Abbey Ntl	1,379	Lloyds TSB	10,664
Allied Dom	1,944	LucasVarity	2,184
Allnce & Leic	855	Marks Spr	4,003
Amvescap	1,391	Nat Grid	1,665
AB Foods	531	Nat Power	3,394
Bk of Scot	3,995	NatWst Bk	3,622
BAA	2,759	Next	8,174
Barclays	3,210	Norwich Un	2,881
Bass	937	Nycomed Amr	78
BAT Inds	3,854	Orange	2,220
BG	9,079	P & O	2,222
Billiton	3,939	Pearson	1,712
Blue Circle	1,638	PowerGen	1,970
BOC	1,535	Prudential	4,930
Boots	1,435	Railtrack	1,327
BAe	781	Rank Group	1,132
BA	3,846	Reckitt Col	529
Brit Energy	2,484	Reed Intl	5,411
Br Land	2,579	Rentokil	5,184
BP	5,631	Reuters	6,909
Brit Steel	7,791	Rio Tinto	3,004
BSkyB	1,331	Rolls Royce	7,134
BT	8,608	Royal & Sun	3,276
BTR	5,227	Royal Bk Sct	1,809
Cable Wire	4,768	Safeway	3,076
Cadbury	4,210	Sainsbury	1,385
Carlton Cms	5,963	Schroders	185
Centrica	6,371	Scot & New	1,004
Cm Union	2,283	Scot Power	1,832
Compass Gp	816	Svrn Trent	668
Diageo	3,905	Shell Trans	11,489
EMI	2,479	Siebe	1,614
Energy Gp	2,999	Smiths Ind	984
Enterpr Oil	2,348	SmKl Bch	12,328
Gen Acc	747	Std Chrtrd	3,357
Gen Elec	12,295	Sun Life	877
GKN	1,428	Tesco	4,985
Glaxo Well	5,576	Thames W	1,366
Granada	1,385	Tomkins	3,627
GUS	9,412	Unilever	3,958
GRE	7,766	Utd News	1,816
Hays	1,239	Utd Utilities	1,910
ICI	1,854	Vodafone	12,261
Kingfisher	1,613	Whitbread	735
HSBC	2,384	Williams	1,292
Halifax	3,650	Wolseley	11,813
Ladbroke	1,254	Woolwich	3,585
Land Secs	2,019	Zeneca	1,146

WALL STREET

	Apr 24 midday	Apr 23 close
AMP Inc	39¾	40
AMR Corp	152½	155¼
AT & T	62¼	61¾
Abbott Labs	72¼	72½
Advanced Micro	29¾	29¾
Aetna Life	80¼	81¾
Ahmanson (HF)	78¾	78½
Air Prod & Chem	89¼	88¾
AirTouch Comm	54½	54¾
Albertson's	48½	48¼
Alcan Alumnm	32¾	32¼
Allied Signal	45¼	45¾
Alum Co of Am	78¾	79
Amerada Hess	57¾	58¼
AEP	47¼	46½
Amer Express	104½	103¾
Amer Genl Corp	67¼	68¼
Amer Home Pr	91	91¾
Amer Intl	135¾	138¾
Amer Stores	24¾	24¼
Amer Standard	46½	47
Ameritech	44	44¾
Amgen	58¼	57¼
Amoco	85¾	86½
Andrew Corp	23¼	23¾
Anheuser-Busch	46¾	46½
Apple Computer	27¾	27¾
Archer Daniels	21¾	21¾
Armco	6¾	6¾
Armstrng Wrld	87	86½
Asarco	26½	26¼
Atl Richfield	77½	77¾
Atmel Corp	20¼	19¼
Auto Data Pro	65¾	66¼
Avery Dennison	54¼	54½
Avon Products	82¾	82½
Baker Hughes	41½	42¾
Baltim Gas & El	31¼	31¼
Banc One	59¼	59¼
BankAmerica	86¾	86¼
Bank of NY	59½	60¾
Bankers Tr NY	130	131¾
Bausch & Lomb	51	51¾
Baxter Intl	54½	53½
Bectn Dicknsn	75½	73¾
Bell Atlantic	93¾	94¼
BellSouth	64½	65¼
Best Foods	112	114¾
Black & Decker	50¼	51¼
Block (H&R)	45½	47¾
Boeing	50¾	51¾
Boise Cascade	38¼	39¾
Boston Scien	68½	69¾
Bristol Myrs Sq	104¼	104¾
Browning Ferris	33¼	33¼
Brunswick	31¼	32¼
Burlington Ntin	101¾	103¼
CMS Energy Corp	43¾	43¼
CSX	53½	53¾
CBS Corp	35¾	34¾
Campbell Soup	50¾	50¾
Carolina Pwr	42¾	41½
Case Corp	62¾	63¾
Caterpillar	57¾	58½
Central & SW	26	25¾
Champion Intl	54¼	55¼
Chase Manhat	135¾	136¼
Chevron Corp	82¼	84¼
Chrysler	41¾	42¼
Chubb Corp	79½	81¼
Cigna Corp	204¼	207¾
Citicorp	155¾	156½
Clorox	85	84½
Coastal Corp	68¾	69
Coca Cola	74	74¼
Coca Cola Ent	39¾	40
Colgate-Palm	87½	89¼
Columbia Energy	80¼	80½
ColumbiaHCA	33½	33
Compaq Comp	29¾	28¾
Comp Ass Int	59¼	58¼
Conagra	29¾	29½
Cons Edison	44¾	44½
Cons Nat Gas	57¼	58½
Cooper Inds	65¾	66¼
CoreStates	100¼	100¾
Corning Inc	40¾	40¾
C'wide Credit	49¼	50¾
Crestar Finl	60¼	60¼
Crown Cork	52¼	53¾
Dana Corp	60	59¾
Dayton Hudson	83½	84¼
Deere	61½	61¾
Delta Air Lines	118½	121
Deluxe Corp	33	33½
Digital Equip	56½	56¾
Dillard Dept St	37	36¾
Disney (Walt)	121½	123¾
Dominion Res	38½	39½
Donelley (RR)	44½	43¼
Dover Corp	39¾	39¼
Dow Chemical	98¾	99
Dow Jones	50¾	50¾
Dresser	50½	50¾
Duke Energy	57¾	57¼
Dun & Bradstreet	35¾	35½
Du Pont	74½	76½
Eastman Chem	68¾	70½
Eastman Kodak	72½	72½
Eaton Corp	90¾	89¾
Edison Intl	28¼	28¾
Elect Data Sys	41¾	41¾
Emerson Elec	63½	64
Engelhard Corp	19¾	19¾
Enron Corp	48¼	49¾
Entergy	27¼	26¼
Ethyl Corp	8	8¼
Exxon	73¾	73¼
FDX Holding	70½	71½
FMC Corp	77½	78¾
FPL Group	60½	59¾
Fifth Third Banc	55½	55¾
Fleet Finl Grp	89¾	88¾
Fluor Corp	45½	45½
Ford Motor	45¾	45¾
Fort James	49¼	45¼
Fortune Brands	38	37¾
Franklin Res	51¾	52½
GTE Corp	59¾	59¼
Gannett	69¼	69¾
Gap Inc Del	46½	46¾
Gateway 2000	56¾	52½
Gen Dynamics	42¾	42¾
Gen Electric	84¾	84¾
Gen Mills	69¾	69½
Gen Motors	67¾	68¾
Gen Reinsurance	223½	226
Gen Signal	44¾	45
Genuine Parts	35½	35¾
Georgia Pac	74½	74½
Gillette	116¾	117½
Glaxo Wellc ADR	51½	52¾
Goodrich (BF)	52¼	53¾
Goodyear Tire	70¾	71¾
Great Lakes	51¼	51
Halliburton	52½	52¾
Harcourt General	52¼	52¾
Heinz (HJ)	54¼	55½
Hercules	48¾	48¾
Hershey Foods	67¾	70¼
Hewlett Packard	71¾	66¼
Hilton Hotels	32¾	33
Home Depot	69¼	70½
Homestake Mng	12¼	13¾
Honeywell	93¾	94½
Household Intl	133¼	133¾
Houston Inds	28½	28¾
Humana	26¾	26¾
Ikon Office	22¼	24¾
Illinois Tool	68	68¾
Illinova	28¼	28½
INCO	18¾	18¾
Ingersoll Rand	49¾	49¼
Inland Steel	28½	28¼
Intel Corp	82¾	83½
IBM	117	117½
Intl Flav & Fr	49¼	48¾
Intl Paper	52¾	53½
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	70¾	71¼
Kellogg	40¾	41
Kerr-McGee	66¼	66½
Kimberly-Clark	51¾	51¾
Kmart	17¾	17¾
Knight-Ridder	57½	56½
Lilly (Eli)	69¾	70¾
Limited Inc	30¾	31½
Lincoln Nat	90½	91¼
Litton	62¾	63¾
Liz Claiborne	48¼	48½
Lockheed Martin	114¾	115¼
Louisiana Pac	21¼	22¾
MCI Comm	51½	51¾
Manpower Inc	41	41
Marriott Int	33½	33½
Marsh & McLnn	91¼	91¼
Masco Corp	56½	57½
May Dept St	64¾	64¾
Maytag Corp	51½	51½
McDonalds	58¾	58½
McGraw Hill	77¾	77¼
Mead Corp	35¾	35¾
Meditrust Corp	30¼	30¾
Medtronic	51½	51¾
Mellon Bk	77¼	75½
Merck Inc	118½	119¼
Mercury Fin	0¼	0½
Merrill Lynch	88¾	89¼
Microsoft	93¾	94½
Minnesota Mine	92¾	94¼
Mirage Resorts	22¼	22¾
Mobil Corp	79¼	79¾
Monsanto	55¾	54¼
Morgan (JP)	135½	137½
Motorola Inc	56½	56¼
Mylan Labs	26¼	27¾
Natl Semi	22¾	22½
Natl Service Ind	53¾	53¾
Navistar Int	30¾	30¾
NY Times A	71¼	73½
Newmont Mng	33¾	34¼
Nike B	46	46¼
NL Industries	19¾	19
Nordstrom	65½	65½
Norfolk Sthrn	34¼	35
Ntlhn State Pwr	55½	55¼
Norwest Corp	39¾	39¾
Occidental Pet	29	28¾
Office Depot	32¾	33½
Oracle	26¼	26¾
Oryx Energy Co	25	25¾
Owens Corning	40¾	41¾
PPG Industries	70¼	71¾
PMI Group	80¼	78¾
PNC Bank	61¼	62
PP&L Res	22¼	22¾
Paccar Inc	53¼	53
Pacificorp	22	21¾
Pac Enterprises	38¾	38¾
PaineWebber	45¼	45½
Pall Corp	19¾	20
Parker Hannifin	44¼	44¼
Peco Energy	22¾	22¼
Penney (JC)	71	71½
Pennzoil	64½	64½
Pepsico	43½	44¾
Pfizer	117½	115¾
Pharm & Upjhn	39¼	40¾
Phelps Dodge	69½	69½
Philip Morris	38¼	38½
Phillips Pet	48½	48¾
Pitney Bowes	49½	49¾
Polaroid	44¾	44½
Procter & Gmbl	86¼	86½
Providian	63½	64¼
Pub Serv E & G	34	33½
Quaker Oats	53½	53¾
Ralston Purina	105½	105½
Raychem Corp	39¾	39¾
Raytheon B	56¼	56¼
Reebok Intl	29½	29¾
ReliaStar Fin	47½	47¼
Reynolds Metals	67½	67¼
Rockwell Intl	55½	55¾
Rohm & Haas	108½	109½
Royal Dutch	56¼	56½
Rubbermaid	29¼	29¾
SBC Comms	41½	41¼
Safeco Corp	51¼	51½
St Paul's Cos	83¾	84¼
Sara Lee Corp	60¾	61¾
Schering Plough	82¾	81¾
Schlumberger	78¼	79
Seagram	39¾	38¾
Sears Roebuck	59¾	59½
Shell Trans	43¼	43½
Sherwin Wllms	33¼	33¾
Silicon Graphics	13¾	13¼
Snap-On-Tools	44¾	44¼
Southern Co	26¼	26½
Southtrust	43¼	43¾
Sprint Corp	70½	69¾
Stanley Works	51½	51¾
Starwood H & R	49¼	49¾
Sun Company	41¾	42½
Sun Microsys	40¾	39¾
Suntrust	80½	80¼
Supervalu	44¾	44¾
Synovus Fin	36¼	35¾
Sysco Corp	23¾	23¾
TRW Inc	51¾	51
TIG Hldgs	24½	25½
Tandy Corp	51¼	51¾
Temple Inland	63¾	63¾
Tenet Healthcare	38¾	38¼
Tenneco	46¼	46¾
Texaco	61¾	62¾
Texas Inst	62½	62¼
Texas Utilities	40¾	40½
Textron	78¼	79¼
Thermo Elect	40	40¼
Time Warner	76¾	77¾
Times-Mirror A	59¾	59¼
Timken	35¼	35½
Torchmark	47¼	47¾
Toys R Us	29½	28¼
Transamerica	117¼	115½
Travelers	63¾	63¼
Tribune	66¾	66½
UST Inc	30¼	30¾
US Bancorp	126¾	127
UAL	90½	90¾
Unitrin	71½	71½
US Inds	26¾	28¾
US West Comm	52½	52¾
US West Media	36½	37
USAirways Group	73	77
USX Marathon	36½	36¼
Unicom	33½	33¾
Unilever NV	73¾	73½
Union Camp	60¾	60¾
Union Carbide	49¾	49¾
Union Pacific	55¼	55¾
Unisys Corp	21¼	21¾
USF&G Corp	23½	23½
United Tech	98¾	98
Unocal Corp	41½	41¾
VF Corp	50¾	50¾
Wal-Mart Stores	50¼	51¾
Warner-Lambert	185¼	185½
Waste Mngmt	33¾	33¾
Wells Fargo	372	374¾
Weyerhaeuser	58	58¼
Whirlpool	71¾	71½
Whitman	20¾	21
Winn Dixie	38¼	38¾
Witco Corp	39¾	40¼
Woolworth	23¾	24¼
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	82	82¼
Xerox	110½	108¾
Xilinx Inc	45¾	42¼

NEWS

Close Diana fund, says her brother

■ Earl Spencer has written to all nine trustees of the memorial fund set up to honour Diana, Princess of Wales, telling them to wind up their charity, which he says is tasteless and degrading his sister's memory. He has told them to fix a date to stop taking donations and to hand out all the money it has collected so far. The fund expects to have £100 million by the end of the year ..... **Pages 1, 7**

Record holiday compensation claims

■ Package tour companies are braced for record compensation demands for ruined holidays as tourists launch new-style legal actions with consumer powers enabling them to sue operators for everything that goes wrong abroad ..... **Page 1**

22 executed

Twenty-two people were executed in Rwanda for their part in a massacre of 500,000 ..... **Page 1**

Mother's campaign

The MP who is leading the campaign for homosexual sex to be legalised for 16-year-olds took up the cause after being reunited with her gay son ..... **Page 3**

Boss settles

A woman who claimed she had been bombarded with sexist and racist comments by her Japanese boss reached a settlement . **Page 5**

Man, 79, kneecapped

A wave of horror and revulsion swept Northern Ireland after republican paramilitaries kneecapped a 79-year-old man . **Page 6**

Tea remedy

Wrinkles on the forehead and crow's feet around the eyes can be prevented by a cream containing vitamins, green tea and minerals ..... **Page 8**

Roles reversed

One in five fathers will be househusbands while their partners become the breadwinners, working five hours a day, a report on 2020 forecast ..... **Page 9**

Rumour fed riot

The Sidney Cooke riot in Bristol started with a rumour that he was in Burger King ..... **Page 14**

Pedant Baudelaire

A set of proofs annotated by Charles Baudelaire proves that the great French poet was also a pernickety pedant ..... **Page 16**

Duma gives in

Russia's crisis evaporated when the Duma endorsed Sergei Kiriyenko, the President's nominee for Prime Minister ..... **Page 17**

Mia Farrow crisis

Mia Farrow's family was confronting a new crisis after a report that one of the children she adopted with Andre Previn was suffering from Aids ..... **Page 20**

Yellow is the match of the day

■ Football enthusiasts who watch *Match of the Day* tonight should not adjust their sets. The ball used in the match between Everton and Sheffield Wednesday at Goodison Park today really is fluorescent yellow. The manufacturers say that eyes see yellow most clearly of all the colours ..... **Page 1**

JAMES GRAY



Lorries with an armed police guard taking weapons-grade uranium to Dounreay from RAF Kinloss where it had arrived by air from Georgia. **Page 2**

NEWS FEATURES

The Light Brigade: Letters showing the recriminations have been found in a regimental museum ..... **Page 11**

Millennium makeover: Plans for a festival on the Thames to celebrate London's "cultural pearls" ..... **Page 13**

Early find: Archaeological evidence of a pre-Roman civilisation at Pompeii ... **Page 19**

Valerie Grove: With Nick Reilly, the Vauxhall Motors chairman who offered to give up his £160,000 salary for a year if the workers would accept a new three-year pay deal ..... **Page 21**

OPINION

Remembering Diana: The memorial fund should wind itself up and ask the public to send money directly to the causes to which she devoted her life ..... **Page 23**

Fear and loathing: A responsible society, with respect for the fundamental principles of law, cannot allow fear of paedophilia to sweep facts away ..... **Page 23**

LETTERS

Plutonium; bookmakers; youth and music; art restoration; nurses's pay; research and animals; films ... **Page 23**

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: The "art" market is currently being flooded with objects whose worth lies not in their aesthetic appeal but in their previous ownership ..... **Page 22**

Edmund Penning-Rowsell: By 2050 St Mark's Square will be flooded every day and disastrous floods, such as in 1966, will occur at least every 25 years ..... **Page 22**

OBITUARIES

Elaine Brunner, conservationist; **Dudley Holroyd,** organist; **Robert Powell,** of Sherborne School ..... **Page 25**

BUSINESS

Economy: The threat of higher rates receded after data showed a slowdown. **Page 27**

Bonus: Bernie Ebbers, chief executive of WorldCom received a £10 million bonus for gazumping BT to seal the MCI takeover ..... **Page 27**

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 34.2 to 5863.9. Sterling was unchanged at 105.9 after a rise to $1.6673 and a fall to DM2.9923 ..... **Page 31**

WEEKEND MONEY

Rising market in old banknotes; Thomson travel perks; fixed-rate loans.

SPORT

Football: Arsenal will take a four point lead over Manchester United in the Premiership if they win at Barnsley ..... **Page 33, 37**

Cricket: Ian Salisbury, the discarded England spinner, took four wickets as Surrey bowled out Warwickshire on the second day of their county championship match ..... **Page 24**

London marathon: Organisers said that they plan to increase the number of competitors by 10,000 to more than 50,000 for the millennium year. **Page 40**

SECTIONS

the times

Isabel Allende: Appetite for the food of love **Page 18**
One year on: The political ups and downs ... **Page 28**
Stylish living: A 36-page guide ..... **Page 41**
Fashion: Pleats ... **Page 76**
Blind faith: Do spiritual healers have the power to cure? ..... **Page 86**

metro

Big interview: Walking on the mild side with Lou Reed ..... **Page 6**
Books: Oprah's Book Club and six pages of reviews ..... **Pages 14-21**
Art: The heyday of the lampoon ..... **Page 24**
Listings: Full guide for your area ..... **Pages 26-43**

WEEKEND

Christopher Reeve: Superman's book ... **Pages 1, 2**
Memories: A fountain for Diana ..... **Page 3**
Richard Morrison: "Joys" of Lyke Wake Walk **Page 8**
Homes: Burnt out; house fit for a king, at £15,000 a month ..... **Pages 13, 14**
Travel: From the Camargue to Disney's new animal park ..... **Pages 23-31**

Vision

Seven-day TV guide

Pets to the stars

Wild Spirits: New adventure supplement

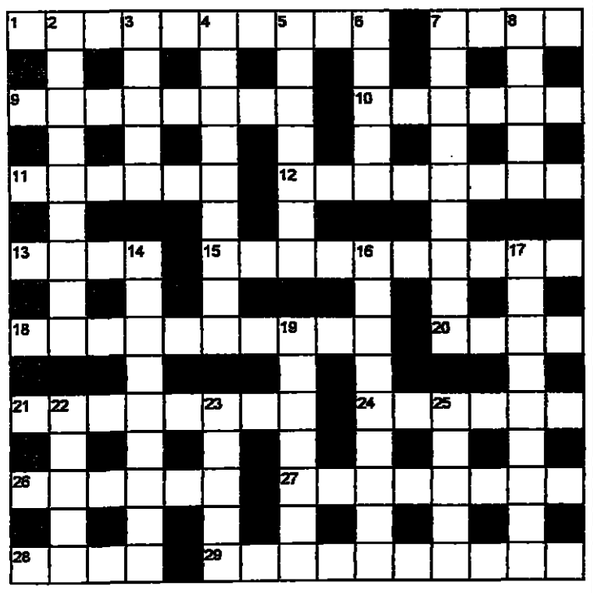
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,775

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address .....

.....

.....



ACROSS

1 At first sight demure, one gets caught in a grimace (5,5).
7 Found actors making an appearance (4).
9 Coins are unusual in outline (8).
10 Cut one piece of material to go round front of nightdress (6).
11 The purpose of camping (6).
12 Gift tied up at work (8).
13 Disposition to get sentence reversed (4).
15 It could spatter oil about me (10).
18 Stopped taking bets? It's incomprehensible (6,4).
20 From active vent, molten lava finally seen here (4).
21 Prize gold before iron when it comes to posh French dish (3-2-3).
24 Drink (hot) available in water bottle (6).
26 Turned a novel event into an opera (6).
27 Journey by road or air transport (8).
28 Quote a lot of speech (4).
29 Progressive advantage involved capturing rook (5-5).

DOWN

2 Music produced by fabulous bird right inside hill (4,1,4).
3 Whale swallowing krill, primarily, in abundant supply (5).
4 Direct leading seaman (5-4).
5 In uneven position hold game up — it can take the heat off (7).
6 Order English dictionary (5).
7 Possibly a special artist (9).
8 Scrap with ringleader in cast (5).
14 In court, is standard completely different? (9).
16 Force group of workers to become temporary (9).
17 Sleepy place fratricide fled to (4,2,3).
19 Sprayed it upon a cactus (7).
22 Some inferior ibices and antelope (5).
23 Plants left in public squares (5).
25 Prize given to a resort in the Mediterranean (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20769

LABOURSAVING
A A P A I O T P
DUSTCOVER BIHAR
D S C E T E E O
EXODUS BULLYOFF
R N O R I
SAMITE ESSAYIST
E R T N S
BELLYFUL STITCH
A O R I E
REDESIGN SPIDER
O T L E A H E O
UNSAY NEXTOFKIN
E T P E O N K R
HEAVENLYBODY

Solution to Puzzle No 20774

KINGFISHER FELL
R E I P O C O
IMPERVIOUS THUS
S H S N I H E A
WELT SITWELLON
P W R T Y I O G
UNSEEDED CRINGE
N F R F A L
CAMPUS WARPLANE
H O S V I P D S
DAMNATION ARMY
R B L V T R I B
UTAH MACEBEARER
N S C S N A A
KOAN PENTATHLON

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: *C J Marshall, Leamington Spa, Warks; T Kenton Hole, Woodford Green, Essex; R Arthur, Wakefield; N Forde, Drumnree Co Meath, Eire; K J Lyon, Comiston View, Edinburgh.*

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises: 5.45 am — Sun sets: 8.14 pm
Moon sets 6.54 pm — Moon rises 5.37 am

New moon tomorrow

London 8.14 pm to 5.43 am
Bristol 8.23 pm to 5.53 am
Edinburgh 8.39 pm to 5.41 am
Manchester 8.26 pm to 5.45 am
Penzance 8.32 pm to 6.08 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises: 5.43 am — Sun sets: 8.15 pm
Moon sets 8.16 pm — Moon rises 6.08 am

New moon today

London 8.15 pm to 5.41 am
Bristol 8.25 pm to 5.51 am
Edinburgh 8.41 pm to 5.39 am
Manchester 8.29 pm to 5.43 am
Penzance 8.35 pm to 6.06 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	0:05	4.2	12:12	4.3
Avonmouth	6:22	13.5	6:28	13.6
Belfast	9:48	3.5	10:21	3.4
Cardiff	5:58	12.5	6:14	12.6
Devonport	4:37	5.5	4:56	5.5
Dover	9:51	6.7	10:13	6.9
Dublin	10:24	4.3	10:57	4.2
Falmouth	4:58	5.2	4:27	5.3
Greenock	11:36	3.4	11:54	3.3
Harwich	10:53	4.1	11:10	4.0
Holyhead	9:06	5.8	9:36	5.7
Hull (Albert Dk)	5:12	8.6	5:18	8.9
Ilfracombe	4:48	9.4	5:12	9.5
King's Lynn	5:20	6.6	5:25	7.1
Leith	1:16	5.6	1:30	5.6
Liverpool	10:05	9.7	10:33	9.7
London Bridge	10:24	7.0	12:58	7.4
Lowestoft	9:28	2.4	9:25	2.6
Margate	11:02	4.5	11:04	4.9
Milford Haven	6:00	7.1	5:28	7.1
Newquay	3:54	7.1	4:19	7.1
Oban	4:42	4.1	5:05	3.9
Penzance	3:21	5.6	3:48	5.6
Portland	5:28	2.0	6:03	2.1
Portsmouth	10:10	4.6	10:38	4.8
Shoreham	10:01	6.3	10:26	6.6
Southampton	9:35	4.6	10:03	4.8
Swansea	5:09	9.8	5:35	9.9
Tees	2:26	5.5	2:36	5.6
Walton-On-Naze	10:45	4.2	11:00	4.2

All times BST. Heights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Yeovilton, Somerset, 17C (63F); lowest day max: Lerwick, Shetland, 07C (45F); highest rainfall: Lerwick, Shetland, 0.43in; highest sunshine: Teignmouth, Devon and Aberdeen, 7.7hr

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997

FORECAST

☐ **General:** southeastern and eastern parts of England, along with eastern Scotland, will start the day dull and wet with some rather heavy rain. That will clear to leave a better afternoon with sunny spells and just the odd shower. Elsewhere, there will be sunny spells through the day but scattered showers will break out. Some of them will be heavy, with the worst over western Scotland and Northern Ireland, where they will merge into longer periods of rain, with thunderstorms possible. Tonight will be mainly dry.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E England:** dull, wet and windy this morning with heavy rain, clearing to brief sunny spells and the odd shower. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **Midlands, Central N, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee:** early rain soon clearing to sunny spells and scattered showers. Fresh winds easing. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **Channel Isles, SW England, Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** overnight rain clearing, leaving sunny spells and sharp showers with a blustery southwest wind. Max 15C (59F).

☐ **Aberdeen, Cent Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland:** sunny spells and the chance of a shower here and there. Moderate southwesterly wind. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, Northern Ireland:** sunny spells, and showers, more frequent and heavier this afternoon with thunder possible. Blustery south to southwest winds. Max 14C (57F).

☐ **Orkney, Shetland:** rather cloudy with brief sunny spells and occasional showers. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** bright or sunny intervals and showers, some heavy and perhaps thundery. Wind moderate or fresh southwest. Max 14C (57F).

☐ **Outlook:** sunny spells and showers. Some of the showers will be heavy, especially in the north and west, where isolated thunderstorms are possible.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

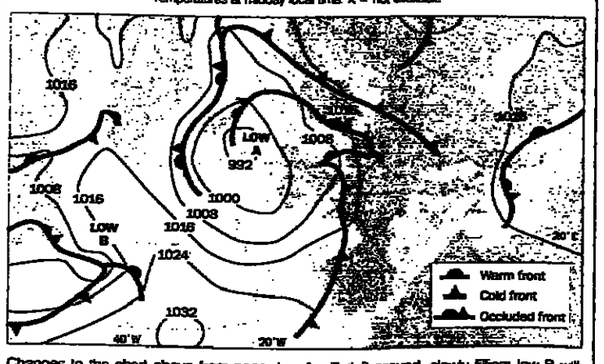
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	7.7	-	14	57	r
Anglesey	4.7	0.03	13	55	s
Aspatria	3.9	0.04	15	59	r
Aviemore	3.6	0.01	13	55	b
Belfast	X				
Birmingham	2.2	0.02	16	61	r
Bognor R	0.2	0.05	13	55	r
Bournem'th	2.9	0.06	15	59	sh
Bristol	4.8	0.03	15	59	b
Buxton	2.9	0.09	14	57	s
Cardiff	X	0.10	16	61	r
Clacton	6.7	0.03	12	54	c
Cleethorpes	X				
Colwyn Bay	6.8	0.01	17	63	s
Cromer	4.0	0.01	15	59	b
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	0.9	0.06	13	55	r
Edinburgh	4.9	0.01	15	59	sh
Eskdalemuir	0.2	0.08	11	52	r
Exmouth	5.1	0.02	17	63	b
Falmouth	X				
Fishguard	7.0	0.02	14	57	r
Folkestone	2.1	0.10	13	55	r
Glasgow	2.2	0.02	14	57	r
Guernsey	2.4	0.03	15	59	d
Hastings	0.3	0.04	12	54	r
Hayling I	1.0	0.05	13	55	r
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	0.1	0.03	11	52	sh
Hunstanton	1.9	0.01	15	59	c
Isle of Man	4.8	0.08	13	55	b
Isle of Wight	1.5	0.14	12	54	r
Jersey	0.1	0.05	13	55	r
Kinloss	6.5	0.01	16	61	b
Leeds	3.5	0.05	16	61	r
Lerwick	-	0.49	7	45	sg
Leuchars	3.2	0.02	14	57	sh
Littlehmptn	0.1	0.05	12	54	r
London	1.8	0.01	18	61	r
Lowestoft	2.5	0.02	16	61	d
Manchester	3.8	0.03	16	61	s
Margate	3.9	0.03	15	59	r
Minehead	X				
Morecambe	2.2	0.06	14	57	sh
Newcastle	X				
Newquay	X				
Norwich	1.2	0.02	15	59	r
Oxford	X				
Penzance	X	0.06	16	61	r
Poole	1.7	0.06	18	61	b
Prestatyn	X	0.01	16	61	b
Ross on Wye	3.9	0.01	17	63	s
Salcombe	4.1	0.12	15	59	s
Saunton Snd	6.3	0.06	14	57	s
Scarboro'	1.7	0.06	14	57	c
Shrewsbury	5.2	0.04	17	63	r
Skegness	0.5	0.01	14	57	c
Southend	3.4	0.01	13	55	sh
Southport	X	0.01	15	59	b
Southsea	1.8	0.02	14	57	r
Stornoway	5.8	0.04	11	52	r
Swanage	2.7	0.06	14	57	sh
Teignmouth	7.7	0.03	17	63	s
Tenby	7.2	0.09	14	57	s
Tiree	6.8	0.01	12	54	r
Torquay	4.7	0.06	17	63	s
Tynemouth	-	0.02	15	59	sh
Weston-s-Mare	6.1	0.20	15	59	s
Weymouth	X				

ABROAD

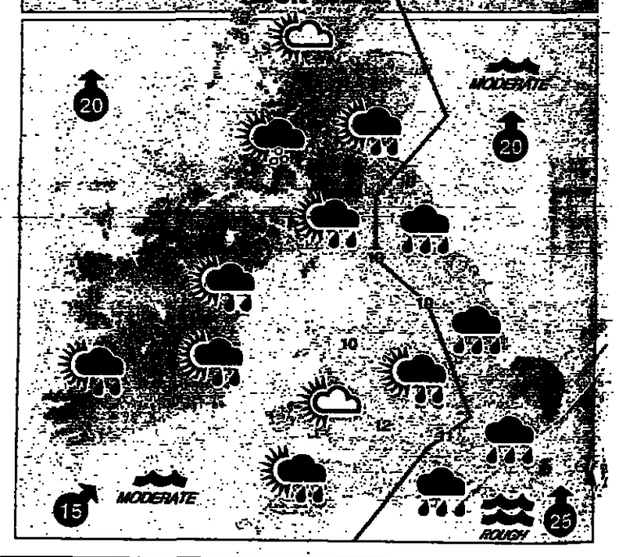
Ajaccio	17	63	s	Cologne	21	70	s	Luxor	32	90	s
Akrotiri	20	68	s	Corfu	21	70	f	Madrid	17	63	s
Alex'dria	22	72	f	C'phagn	13	55	c	Majorca	21	70	f
Algiers	15	59	f	Dublin	10	50	r	Malaga	24	75	s
Amst'dm	19	66	s	Dubrovnik	19	66	f	Malta	20	68	s
Athens	19	66	s	Faro	22	72	s	Melb'rne	15	59	s
B Aires	22	72	f	Florence	22	72	s	Mexico C	11	52	f
Bahrain	36	82	s	Frankfurt	18	64	s	Miami	25	77	c
Bangkok	X			Funchal	19	66	f	Milan	18	64	f
Barbados	29	84	f	Geneva	19	66	s	Montreal	20	68	s
Barcelona	22	72	f	Gibraltar	18	64	s	Moscow	15	59	s
Beijing	X			Helsinki	7	45	r	Munich	18	64	s
Beirut	20	68	f	Hong K	29	84	c	N Delhi	37	99	s
Berlin	17	63	s	Innsbruck	20	68	s	N York	10	50	r
Bermuda	24	75	f	Istanbul	10	50	c	Nairobi	25	77	c
Biarritz	17	63	s	Jeddah	33	91	s	Naples	21	70	c
Borde'x	18	64	f	Jo'burg	23	73	s	Nice	19	66	s
Brussels	19	66	f	Karachi	X			Oslo	11	52	c
Budapst	17	63	s	L Angeles	17	63	f	Paris	16	61	f
Cairo	25	77	s	L Palmas	21	70	c	Perth	X		
Cape Tn	20	68	f	Le Touet	16	61	f	Prague	18	64	s
Ch'church	X			Lisbon	18	64	f	Reykjavik	13	55	f
Chicago	21	70	s	Locarno	17	63	s	Rhodes	19	66	s
				Luxembg	19	66	s	Rio de J	33	91	f
								Riyadh	32	90	s
								Rome	22	72	s
								S Fr'isco	16	61	s
								S Paulo	X		
								Salzburg	19	66	s
								Santiago	20	68	s
								Seoul	24	75	f
								Sing'por	X		
								St'kholm	7	45	c
								Strasb'rg	21	70	s
								Sydney	X		
								Tangier	18	64	f
								Tel Aviv	21	70	f
								Tenerife	21	70	f
								Tokyo	X		
								Toronto	18	64	s
								Tunis	16	61	r
								Valencia	23	73	s
								Vanc'ver	11	52	r
								Venice	18	64	s
								Vienna	18	64	s
								Warsaw	17	63	s
								Wel'ington	X		
								Zurich	20	68	s

Temperatures at midday local time. X = not available



Changes to the chart above from noon: low A will drift around, slowly filling; low B will change little as it runs eastwards; little change of pressure across eastern Europe

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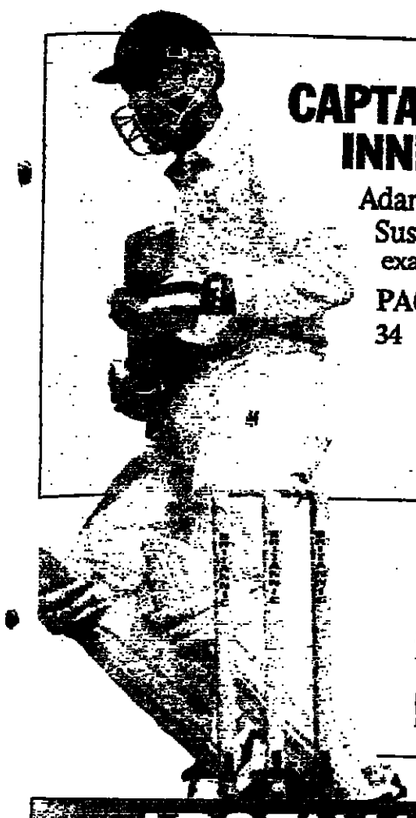
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APRIL 25 1998

SECTIONS
the times
Isabel Allende: Appetite for the food of love Page 8
One year on: The political ups and downs ... Page 28
Stylish living: A 36-page guide ... Page 41
Fashion: Pleats ... Page 76
Blind faith: Do spiritual healers have the power to cure? ... Page 84
metro
Big interview: Walking on the mild side with Lou Reed ... Page 6
Books: Oprah's Book Club and six pages of reviews ... Pages 14-21
Art: The heyday of the lampoon ... Page 24
Listings: Full guide to your area ... Pages 26-40
WEEKEND
Christopher Reeve: Superman's book ... Pages 1,2
Memories: A fountain for Diana ... Page 1
Richard Morrison: "Joys" of Lyke Wake Walk Page 6
Homes: Burnt out home fit for a king at £15,000 a room ... Pages 13, 14
Travel: From the Cam[illegible] to Disney's new [illegible] ... Pages 23-32
TV guide
Stars to the stars
Wind Spirits: New [illegible] supplement

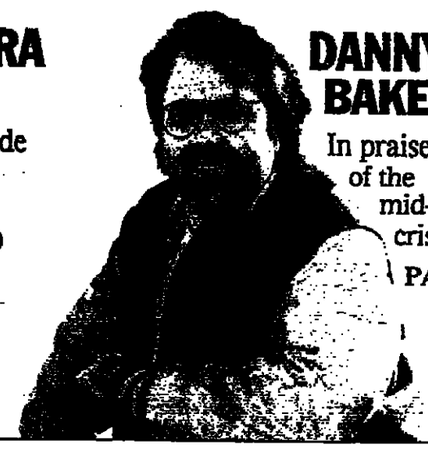


UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

CAPTAIN'S INNINGS
Adams leads Sussex by example
PAGE 34



THE EXTRA MILE
Full colour guide to the London Marathon
PAGE 40



DANNY BAKER
In praise of the mid-table crisis
PAGE 35



WEEKEND MONEY
WHERE TO FIND THE BEST MORTGAGE DEAL
PAGES 53-55



go
HOW TO MAKE A SAFE D.I.Y. CAR
PAGE 46

THE TIMES SATURDAY SPORT
32 PAGES
APRIL 25 1998

ARSENAL HIT THE ROAD WITH THE CHAMPIONSHIP IN VIEW



Coach in the fast lane: Arsenè Wenger follows his players into the team bus to Barnsley. A win at Oakwell will extend Arsenal's lead over Manchester United at the top of the Premiership to four points. *Photograph: Martin Beddall*

All aboard the bus to glory

BY OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

IT FELT like base camp at the Arsenal team hotel yesterday. All the trappings of success left by other clubs who had stayed there before journeying into greatness adorned the walls. There were good luck messages, autographs, pictures of smiling faces and mementoes from bygone eras. The players sat in excited little groups, hardly able to wait to board the team coach for the journey up the M1 to Barnsley and the final push for the summit.

It was euphoric rather than tense in that leafy corner of St Albans. If there were nerves as they prepared to try to grasp the prize that Manchester United have tossed into their hands, they were hidden well. Each of the members of the Arsenal famed back four that has come back into fashion like a well-worn pair of flared trousers gave interviews in different corners of different rooms. The cameras sought out a coronation address.

In another room full of leather sofas and fine china on mahogany tables, Arsenè Wenger, the Arsenal manager, sat back and tried to temper the excitement with a burst of caution. That Arsenal could be crowned champions on Wednesday night if they win at Barnsley today and United lose against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park on Monday night was a prospect that he would not even entertain.

Instead, he soothed those who would crown him with whimsy, with avuncular reflections on what he might do when the day came for him to leave the club on which he has made such a dramatic impression. He said he would like to stay in England because you could go never go long without watching a football match here. Maybe he would become a Barnet supporter because it is so close to his home.

In the end, he cut to the chase that appears to be almost over and warned that Barnsley, fighting to retain the FA Carling Premiership status that was so hard won, may present the most formidable barrier so far to an unbeaten league run that stretches back to December 13.

"It will be a very difficult match," Wenger said. "I would compare it to the Bolton Wanderers game at the end of last month, when we had a very tough battle. I would say that we have to be ready physically and mentally for a big, big fight.

"The greatest danger to us now is that we lose our way and that we lose our collective game, our fluidity in passing and our movement and that we do not play well. We are now in a situation where we have things in our hands, so we have to keep concentrating on keeping our quality. It is psychological now but it has been for two months.

"Listen, things are fragile in football. Two or three months ago, people used to say even when we won: 'Yes, but you are not playing as well as you did at the start of the season.' Then we started to play well again and suddenly that seems to have become normal. But it is never normal."

To emphasise that the bandwagon is still rolling, that fortune is still favouring his side, Wenger confirmed that all his players had returned from midweek international duty unscathed. Martin Keown had been added to the squad, too, after a fortnight's absence with an eye injury. And Ian Wright was "very close" to a comeback to boost morale even more.

Someone even suggested that things were going so well that Wenger must have employed a faith healer. He smiled. "You can only do well if you do what you think is right," he said.

Life at the top, page 36
Marc Overmars, page 37

ARSENAL'S RECORD IN 1998

DATE	OPPONENTS	RESULT	COMP	LEAGUE POS
Jan 3	Port Vale (H)	D 0-0	(FAC, 3)	-
Jan 6	West Ham (A)	W 2-1	(CCC, 5)	-
Jan 10	Leeds Utd (H)	W 2-1	(Prem)	5
Jan 14	Port Vale (A)	D 1-1	(FAC, 3 rep)	-
Jan 17	Coventry (A)	D 2-2	(Prem)	5
Jan 24	Middlesbrough (A)	W 2-1	(FAC, 4)	-
Jan 28	Chelsea (H)	W 2-1	(CCC, sf)	-
Jan 31	Southampton (H)	W 3-0	(Prem)	5
Feb 8	Chelsea (H)	W 2-0	(Prem)	5
Feb 15	C Palace (H)	D 0-0	(FAC, 5)	-
Feb 18	Chelsea (A)	L 1-3	(CCC, sf)	-
Feb 21	C Palace (H)	W 1-0	(Prem)	2
Feb 25	C Palace (A)	W 2-1	(FAC, 5)	-
Mar 2	West Ham (A)	D 0-0	(Prem)	2
Mar 8	West Ham (H)	D 1-1	(FAC, 6)	-
Mar 11	Wimbledon (A)	W 1-0	(Prem)	2
Mar 14	Man Utd (A)	W 1-0	(Prem)	2
Mar 17	West Ham (A)	D 1-1	(FAC, 6 rep)	-
Mar 28	Sheff Wed (H)	W 1-0	(Prem)	2
Mar 31	Bolton (A)	W 1-0	(Prem)	2
Apr 5	Wolves (N)	W 1-0	(FAC, sf)	-
Apr 11	Newcastle (H)	W 3-1	(Prem)	2
Apr 13	Blackburn (A)	W 4-1	(Prem)	2
Apr 18	Wimbledon (H)	W 5-0	(Prem)	1

Winning formula for spiritual enlightenment

LYNNE TRUSS

SCENE ONE: The curtain rises on a church hall, one April afternoon. Rain darkens the windows. On an old-fashioned turntable, Irving Berlin's Always *is playing. It crackles. Hoddle sits beside a table littered with crystals, tarot cards and miniature statuettes of the England team. He sings along, lost in thought, but is roused by a crack of thunder and the dramatic opening of the door. A jumpy old man enters, wearing a cardigan with shiny suede panels. His hands are nicotine stained. He carries a copy of* Psychic News.

PSYCHIC: Hello? Anybody there? Knock once for yes, ha ha.
HODDLE: What do you want?
PSYCHIC: There you are, squire! Ha ha. Heard the one about the psychic answering the door? "Who's there, knock-knock?" Get it? Blimey, it's warm in here. Can I come in?
HODDLE: If you've come about the job, it's gone.
PSYCHIC: What job? Ha ha. No, honest, is your ankle bothering you at all? I got a sort of — oof, ouch — terrible stiffness in my ankle the minute I walked in. No it's not you: it's someone close to you. I'm seeing a No 8, if that helps. Geezer? Geisha? I've met you before, though, oh yes. Never forget an aura. Ha ha. Like I always say, I can't get in touch with your uncle, but there's a bit of Shredded Wheat here who'd like to say hello. Want to see me materialise a trumpet. I'll do it voluntary! Guess what. My Chinese spirit guide's called Win Wun Soon!
HODDLE: Listen here, mate. I'm looking for someone who can do chakras, not jokes.
PSYCHIC: Jokes? Who's doing jokes? This is serious, mate. Give us your watch. Go on. That's it. Lovely. You know what I pick up from this straight away? Trouble with the missus. Tell you what, keep it hush-hush, mate, if you can. Once the press get hold of it, blimey O'Reilly. You should hear Pat Phoenix banging on! I say to her, "Pat, dear, give it a rest. You've been dead for ages, enjoy it."
HODDLE: Honest, you'd better go. The job's filled anyway.
PSYCHIC: No, no. Listen. I haven't told you yet what I'm mainly getting from this watch.
HODDLE: A bit of anxiety, I suppose.
PSYCHIC (smiling knowingly): No.
HODDLE: Snappiness? Fear?
(The psychic leans forward to whisper.)
PSYCHIC: *Victory.*

SCENE TWO: The same, half-an-hour later. The sun has come out. Hoddle enters, speaking into mobile phone. The psychic sits in Hoddle's chair, with his feet on the table. He is having a fag.

HODDLE (into phone): Like I said, Eileen. He's brilliant. And he's coming!
PSYCHIC (making ready to leave): So, Glenn, I'll see you in June.

(Hoddle shakes his hand warmly.)

PSYCHIC: Oh, and Win Wun Soon says to tell you, Adams's goal was perfectly good. You see, behind every earthly scoreboard there's a psychic one.
HODDLE: There is?
PSYCHIC: If you can read it. You beat Portugal 6-0, he says. Does that make sense to you?

(Hoddle clasps the man in his arms. There are tears in his eyes.)

HODDLE: Oh why do spiritualists always make me feel better?
PSYCHIC: Now *that* I couldn't tell you, mate. That's one of the real deep mysteries, that is.



Loose Cork men quick to lose that early fizz

By Simon Wilde

HEADINGLEY (second day of four): Yorkshire have scored 157 for two wickets against Derbyshire

ONE of Dominic Cork's first acts as Derbyshire captain was to get his players to report for duty early so that they could spend the best part of a month in bonding exercises. These included driving jeeps blindfold (an idea pinched from David Lloyd, the England coach) and orienteering in the county's dales. Cricket did not feature heavily on the schedule.

When Derbyshire beat Nottinghamshire, some people's dark horses, in the opening round of the championship, Cork appeared to have lured the genie out of the bottle for last year's most troubled side, but yesterday, in conditions offering his bowlers limited assistance, the groundwork looked less clever.

In damp conditions — for the second day, overnight rain delayed the start, this time until 3pm — the ball rarely swung, but nor did Derbyshire's all-pace attack maintain control. Yorkshire's brisk progress was assisted by a steady trickle of no-balls and, when Harris removed Vaughan at 79, it may have owed something to the batsman's surprise at receiving a ball of full length.

Harris, who has struggled since his England A tour two winters ago, bowled better after that and later accounted for McGrath, who had been playing himself back into form. McGrath passed 50 only three times in the championship last year and failed twice against Somerset in the opening fixture this season.

He drove the ball impressively and it was disappointing when he looped a low catch to backward point.

CRICKET: BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP GIVES HUSSAIN CHANCE TO ENHANCE CAPTAINCY CLAIMS

Adams steals show in leading role

By Pat Gibson

CHELMSFORD (second day of four): Essex, with nine first-innings wickets in hand, are 320 runs behind Sussex

IT WAS a tale of three captains at the County Ground yesterday. Chris Adams duly completed his first century for Sussex and went on to his highest score for two seasons before he was stopped in his tracks by Nasser Hussain, who was leading Essex in the absence of Paul Prichard.

The most mysterious part involved Prichard, who had looked in no discomfort on the first day but was troubled by a pain in his left leg during the night and went to hospital yesterday morning for an X-ray.

It revealed that he was suffering from shin splints, a condition that has developed over a period of time. He does not need an operation and will bat in an emergency, but, after this match, he must rest for three weeks and avoid putting any weight on the leg.

The most intriguing part concerns Hussain, who has made no secret of the fact that he wants to succeed Michael Atherton as captain of England, and now has the opportunity to press his claim in his longest spell in charge of Essex at the very time that the England selectors are deliberating.

Alec Stewart is the obvious choice to take over, but Hussain clearly fancies his chances and, having served a long apprenticeship as vice-captain to both Prichard and Atherton and led a successful England A tour to Pakistan, he will be doing all he can to prove that he is the right man for the job.

The most significant part, as far as this match has progressed in between the rain, has been played by Adams, who has his own England ambitions, although they do not include the captaincy. Not yet, anyway.

He cannot understand why he has never been picked for England's one-day international side, and there are many who sympathise with him. He is always vulnerable early in an innings because of his technical deficiencies and his eagerness to play his shots from the start, but once he is established he hits the ball as cleanly as anyone.

So it was yesterday when he simply carried on where he had left off on 86 when the rain came the night before. The two fours off Cowan that took him to his hundred were streaky — a cut that flew off a thickish edge wide of second slip and a thinner nick off a defensive shot that sped to third man. After that, however, he played some glorious strokes, including two sixes as he danced down the pitch to Such. He had reached 135 when a slashing cut off Irani was brilliantly plucked out of the air by Hussain, head high and two-handed to his right at point.

Adams had batted for just under four hours, faced 196 balls and struck 18 fours as well as those two sixes and, while the rest of the Sussex batting paled in comparison, it might be different when Michael Bevan arrives next week.

Not that Sussex gave up their wickets without a fight. Adams had left them with plenty to do if they were to gain maximum batting points. But Hussain was left scratching his head as Moores, with 36, Jarvis, with 39, and finally Lewry, with 18 in a last-wicket stand of 35 with Kirtley, lifted them to a healthy 369.

Essex had reached 49 for the loss of Grayson, who had taken on Prichard's role as opener, by the close. Jarvis completed a useful first day's work of his personal season by having his fellow Yorkshireman caught behind.



Shahid, of Surrey, takes evasive action from Penney's off drive. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths / Allsport

Salisbury passes his initial test

By Michael Henderson

THE OVAL (second day of four): Surrey, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 45 runs behind Warwickshire

HOW many chances should an aspiring Test bowler be given? Ian Salisbury is 28 and, were it not for his tendency to pitch too short too often, he might have bridged the gap between county cricket and the international game by now. It is six years since he first played for England and, as a new season shows signs of life, his heart once again beats with hope.

In his nine Tests, Salisbury has taken 18 wickets at 64 apiece with his wrist spin, not a dainty dish to set before a king. On his second appearance, in 1992, he was on the end of some thunderous batting at Old Trafford by Aamir Sohail and Javed Miandad. When he last played, two seasons ago at the Oval, Saeed Anwar plundered a gorgeous hundred as Pakistan won another series. He won't be anxious to see their batsmen again.

After a winter in Sydney, playing for the University of New South Wales, and receiving first-hand tuition from Australia's very own spin doctor, Terry Jenner, he admits to beginning a season in better shape than at any stage of his career. He had a pretty thin first year with Surrey, but with Saqlain Mushtaq back, and a variety of quicker bowlers to take the new ball, Salisbury does not lack support.

Jenner is visiting England this summer, at Surrey's expense, and if Salisbury bowls as tidily as he did yesterday, when his four cheap wickets helped to bowl out Warwickshire for 207, he will feel there is something worth encouraging.

It is tempting to infer too much from performances at county level. Salisbury's wickets were among the last five of the Warwickshire innings, and Test batsmen will not be nearly so tolerant. But there was plenty of snap in his bowling and he looked happy.

Brown, resuming his innings in the morning, played handsomely for a half-century before presenting Butcher with a third wicket. Penney, with whom he shared a stand of 96, became Salisbury's first victim when played all round a ball of fuller length, and Smith, last week's century-maker, misread a googly. By the close, with Butcher and Ratcliffe batting merrily along, Surrey had gained a measure of control.

McMillan recalled to take on England

By Simon Wilde

SOUTH Africa have bolstered their suspect batting by recalling Brian McMillan, whose international career appeared at an end, for their three-month tour of England this summer. McMillan, 34, has a good record against England and, as a former Warwickshire player, experience of the conditions. He topped his country's Test averages on their last visit four years ago.

He is unlikely to bowl much in a party that tellingly includes six fast bowlers, which suggests there is concern that Allan Donald, South Africa's prized strike bowler, may not last the course. He became practised at nursing himself to stay fit for the biggest contests during the winter. The tour includes five Tests and upto six one-day internationals.

If fit, Donald and Pollock should form a dangerous new-ball attack, backed up by Klusener, who has inherited McMillan's position as the team's principal all-rounder. Behind this trio come Ntini, Telemachus and Mornantau Hayward, the only member of the party yet to represent South Africa.

England may be encouraged by the fact that South Africa still hold their best off spinner to be Symcox, who is 37 and cannot command a regular place in the Natal side. He gained a reputation in the winter as a successful tailend batsman but his Test wickets cost 40 apiece. Liebenberg, the reserve wicketkeeper, has not kept at any level since filling the same role on the 1994 tour.

SOUTH AFRICA PARTY: W J Cronje (capt), G Kirsten (vice-capt), P R Adams, A M Bacher, M V Boucher, D J Cullinan, A A Donald, M Hayward, J H Kallis, L Klusener, G F J Liebenberg, B M McMillan, M Ntini, S M Pollock, J N Rhodes, P L Symcox, R Telemachus. Coach: R A Woolmer. Assistant coach: C J P G van Zyl. Manager: S k Reddy.

Fulton keeps Kent afloat

By John Stern

CARDIFF (second day of four; Glamorgan won toss): Kent have scored 91 for three wickets against Glamorgan

WHEN a pitch, which had been covered for a day and a half against heavy rain, is revealed to be as green as this one, there is only one option for the side winning the toss.

Even though this particular Sophia Gardens pitch did change to a browner hue after the groundsman's final trim, Maynard could have had no hesitation in asking Kent to take first innings.

The early overs confirmed his judgment but, in truth, Glamorgan did not make as much of their captain's good fortune with the coin as perhaps they should have done once this contest, between the 1997 champions and runners-up, finally started after the loss of five sessions to the weather.

Steve Watkin took a wicket with the third ball of the match, winning a leg-before decision against the left-hander Walker, who offered no stroke to his first delivery. Ward, restored to the side after missing the victory over Middlesex with a back injury, was also out padding-up, to the medium-paced Butcher's first ball.

Hooper, playing his first championship game of the season in markedly different conditions to those of the Caribbean, survived a vociferous leg-before appeal by Watkin in the following over but fell to the very next delivery, when Maynard's fine, low catch at second slip left Kent 21 for three.

Fulton, though, remained steadfast and took full advantage of the width offered him by Thomas, whose direction did not match his pace, as he moved to an important and hard-earned half-century from 107 balls.

Croft enjoyed an interesting tussle with Alan Wells, who, more than once, made to hit the off spinner over the top, before checking the stroke. Wells was missed down the leg side by Shaw, who was standing up to Butcher, and by the close he and Fulton had added 70 for the fourth wicket.

Hampshire make use of precious time

SOUTHAMPTON (second day of four; Hampshire won toss): Northamptonshire are 35 for two wickets

AFTER nearly two days of rain, the weather held up just enough to allow 16 overs at the County Ground, enough time for Simon Renshaw and John Stephenson to strike a couple of blows for Hampshire in what has effectively become a two-day game (Barney Spender writes).

Richard Montgomerie began scratchily with three singles before aiming an expansive drive at Renshaw and angling the ball into the gully where Kevin James took a good catch. Alec Swann, his opening partner, showed more confidence, especially against Cardigan Connor, the 37-year-old medium-fast bowler, who was playing his first first-class game since breaking down with a knee injury at the end of May last year.

Swann turned him for a couple of boundaries but enjoyed a let-off when James, who replaced Connor, found the edge only to see Matthew Keech in the slips miss the chance.

Stephenson, however, quickly made up for it by trapping Swann leg-before with his first delivery.

Harmison takes control

CHESTER-LE-STREET (second day of four; Gloucestershire won toss): Gloucestershire have scored 182 for six wickets against Durham

EVEN at a tender 19 years of age, Stephen Harmison, the Durham fast-medium bowler, can already testify to the game's rollercoaster nature. His career is on a distinct upward turn after taking the first four Gloucestershire wickets for 21 runs in 12 overs.

Harmison, Northumberland-born, thus returned career-best figures for the third consecutive innings, after his two for 76 and three for 74 against Warwickshire in the opening match.

What a difference a year has made. After making his championship debut in 1996, he returned home early from the England Under-19 tour of Pakistan that winter because of a back injury. He spent last summer playing as a specialist batsmen for Ashington.

After the blank first day, he braved the uncertain footholds and beavered away into the brisk wind to exploit a degree of movement and batting uncertainty that accounted for Trainor, Hancock, Cunliffe and Dawson.

Durham's close fielders had their hands warmed by edged strokes. Some catches carried, notably to Nick Speak, who missed Cunliffe and Dawson. Boon, though, was typically reliable, holding an edge from Trainor, and Speight accepted Cunliffe's intended drive.

Hancock had been leg-before on the back foot to a ball skidding through from Harmison and Wright's hour-long vigil produced nine before Alleyne took a measure of control.

Last July, Alleyne scored 169 and returned match figures of nine for 83 against Durham at Cheltenham. This time, he plundered two swift boundaries in an over from Phillips as a token of intent and nine fours in a 106-ball half-century. Cruelly, he perished to the day's flash of inspirational fielding. After turning Harmison to square leg, he was beaten by a direct hit from Lewis, who had only one stump in his sight.

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Bowen has Somerset rueing loss of the toss

TAUNTON (second day of four; toss won by Nottinghamshire): Somerset have scored 94 for five against Nottinghamshire

WITH only 32 overs to be bowled with a green-looking pitch promising movement off the seam, it was a good toss to win (Jack Bailey writes). Nottinghamshire asked Somerset to bat and made quick inroads through some excellent medium-fast bowling by Mark Bowen, who moved the ball both ways off a responsive pitch and finished his opening spell of nine overs with four wickets for ten runs.

He returned before the end to remove the obdurate Richard Harden, whose technique and soft hands had served his side well. Harden came in after Bowler and Parsons were out with just six runs on the board and only persistent no-balling by Franks to offer any relief. He and Turner looked as though they would see out the day, but Bowen had other ideas, removing Harden at the start of his second spell.

Bowen had taken the wickets of Holloway and Ecclestone with successive balls in his seventh over. Both the left-handed Holloway and his burly team-mate were neatly taken at first slip. At 39 for four, Somerset were dangerously placed.

Turner survived a loud appeal for leg-before from the hat-trick ball and was dropped in the gulley off a straightforward chance — again Bowen was the bowler — but he went on to accompany Harden in a half-century partnership.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Britannic Assurance county championship

Durham v Gloucestershire

RIVERSIDE (second day of four; Gloucestershire won toss): Gloucestershire have scored 182 for six wickets against Durham

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: First Innings
N J Trainor c Boon b Harmison ... 20
R J Cunliffe c Speight b Harmison ... 17
T H C Hancock lbw b Harmison ... 5
A J Wright lbw b Wood ... 9
R I Dawson b Harmison ... 1
*M W Alleyne run out Lewis ... 51
†R C Russell not out ... 39
M C J Ball not out ... 19
Extras (b 2, lb 3, nb 16) ... 21
Total (6 wkts, 81 overs) ... 182

J Lewis, A M Smith and C A Walsh to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-29, 2-45, 3-48, 4-52, 5-78, 6-137

BOWLING: Wood 21-5-65-1, Harmison 27-12-45-4; Walker 18-4-33-0, Phillips 10-1-24-0; Collingwood 5-3-10-0.

DURHAM: J J B Lewis, M A Roseberry, J E Morris, N J Speak, *D C Boon, †M P Speight, P D Collingwood, N C Phillips, J Wood, A Walker, S J Harmison

Bonus points: Durham 2, Gloucestershire 0

Umpires: R A White and P Willey

Glamorgan v Kent

CARDIFF (second day of four; Glamorgan won toss): Kent have scored 93 for three wickets against Glamorgan

KENT: First Innings
D P Fulton not out ... 57
M J Walker lbw b Watkin ... 0
T R Ward lbw b Butcher ... 11
C L Hooper c Maynard b Watkin ... 1
A P Wells not out ... 24
Total (3 wkts, 42 overs) ... 93

M A Ealham, M V Fleming, *†S A Marsh, B J Phillips, A P Igglesden and D W Headley to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-3, 2-20, 3-21

BOWLING: Watkin 9-3-19-2, Thomas 11-4-27-0; Butcher 5-2-11-1, Croft 11-4-18-0; Cosker 6-1-18-0

GLAMORGAN: S P James, A W Evans, A Dale, *M P Maynard, P A Cottey, R D B Croft, G P Butcher, †A D Shaw, S D Thomas, S L Watkin, D A Cosker

Bonus points: Glamorgan 1, Kent 0

Umpires: H D Bird and J W Holder

Essex v Sussex

CHELMSFORD (second day of four; Essex won toss): Essex, with nine first-innings wickets in hand, are 320 runs behind Sussex

SUSSEX: First Innings
N R Taylor lbw b Irani ... 35
M T E Peirce c Law b Napier ... 20
*C J Adams c Hussain b Irani ... 135
J Carpenter b Such ... 19
R K Rao c Rollins b Grayson ... 12
K Newell b Williams ... 13
†P Moores b Such ... 36
P W Jarvis c sub b Williams ... 39
A A Khan c Rollins b Napier ... 5
R J Kirtley not out ... 12
J D Lewry c Hussain b Cowan ... 18
Extras (b 4, lb 7, nb 14) ... 25
Total (112.4 overs) ... 369

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-52, 2-60, 3-130, 4-172, 5-231, 6-254, 7-294, 8-303, 9-334

BOWLING: Cowan 21.4-6-67-1, Williams 22-7-71-2, Napier 14-3-59-2, Irani 23-7-66-2, Such 23-6-81-2, Grayson 9-4-14-1

ESSEX: First Innings
D D J Robinson not out ... 22
A P Grayson c Moores b Jarvis ... 17
A P Cowan not out ... 7
Extras (lb 1, nb 2) ... 3
Total (1 wkt, 18 overs) ... 49

*†P J Prichard, N Hussain, S G Law, R C Irani, †R J Rollins, G R Napier, N F Williams and P M Such to bat

FALL OF WICKET: 1-39

BOWLING: Kirtley 6-2-20-0, Jarvis 7-0-25-1; Khan 5-4-3-0.

Bonus points: Essex 4, Sussex 4

Umpires: J H Harris and R Palmer.

Hampshire v Northamptonshire

SOUTHAMPTON (second day of four; Hampshire won toss): Northamptonshire have scored 35 for two wickets against Hampshire

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: First Innings
R R Montgomerie c James b Renshaw ... 3
A J Swann lbw b Stephenson ... 19
M B Loye not out ... 10
J P Taylor not out ... 0
Extras (lb 1, nb 2) ... 3
Total (2 wkts, 16 overs) ... 35

D J G Sales, R J Bailey, *K M Curran, †D Ripley, G P Swann, D E Malcolm and F A Rose to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-3, 2-32

BOWLING: Connor 5-0-15-0; Renshaw 6-1-9-1, James 3-1-8-0, Stephenson 2-1-2-1

HAMPSHIRE: J S Laney, G W White, *R A Smith, M Keech, W S Kendall, J P Stephenson, †A N Aymes, S D Udal, K D James, S J Renshaw, C A Connor.

Umpires: J W Lloyds and N T Plews.

Yorkshire v Derbyshire

HEADINGLEY (second day of four: Yorkshire won toss): Yorkshire have scored 157 for two wickets against Derbyshire

YORKSHIRE: First Innings
A McGrath c DeFreitas b Harris ... 42
M P Vaughan lbw b Harris ... 33
*D Byas not out ... 21
M J Wood not out ... 22
Extras (b 1, lb 2, w 6, nb 30) ... 39
Total (2 wkts, 55 overs) ... 157

C White, B Parker, †R J Blakey, D Gough, C E W Silverwood, P M Hutchison and I D Fisher to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-79, 2-96

BOWLING: DeFreitas 18-5-50-0, Cork 10-0-25-0; Harris 11-2-42-2, Aldred 16-5-37-0

DERBYSHIRE: A S Rollins, M R May, T A Tweats, K J Barnett, M E Cassar, *D G Cork, †K M Krikken, I D Blackwell, P A J DeFreitas, P Aldred, A J Harris.

Umpires: K E Palmer and G Sharp.

Somerset v Nottinghamshire

TAUNTON (second day of four; Nottinghamshire won toss): Somerset have scored 94 for five wickets against Nottinghamshire

SOMERSET: First Innings
*P D Bowler c Dowman b Bowen ... 0
P C L Holloway c Pollard b Bowen ... 22
K A Parsons c Wharf b Bowen ... 0
R J Harden c Noon b Bowen ... 36
S C Ecclestone c Pollard b Bowen ... 0
†R J Turner not out ... 20
A R K Pierson not out ... 2
Extras (nb 14) ... 14
Total (5 wkts, 32 overs) ... 94

G D Rose, M E Trescothick, A R Caddick and K J Shine to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-6, 2-6, 3-39, 4-39, 5-69

BOWLING: Bowen 11-6-13-5; Franks 12-3-43-0, Wharf 5-0-33-0, Strang 4-3-5-0

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: P R Pollard, M P Dowman, J E R Gallian, *P Johnson, R T Robinson, U Afzaal, P A Strang, †W M Noon, P J Franks, A G Wharf, M N Bowen

Bonus points: Somerset 0, Nottinghamshire 2

Umpires: T E Jesty and M J Kitchen.

Surrey v Warwickshire

THE OVAL (second day of four: Surrey won toss): Surrey, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 45 runs behind Warwickshire

WARWICKSHIRE: First Innings
N V Knight lbw b Butcher ... 27
D P Ostler b Bicknell ... 0
*B C Lara c Salisbury b Butcher ... 38
D L Hemp c A J Hollioake b B C Hollioake 2
T L Penney b Salisbury ... 46
D R Brown lbw b Butcher ... 60
N M K Smith b Salisbury ... 10
†K J Piper c B C Hollioake b Salisbury 0
G Welch c Brown b Bicknell ... 12
T A Munton c Butcher b Salisbury ... 2
E S H Giddins not out ... 0
Extras (lb 6, nb 4) ... 10
Total (74.3 overs) ... 207

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-1, 2-59, 3-62, 4-82, 5-176, 6-182, 7-182, 8-195, 9-207.

BOWLING: Bicknell 21-5-55-2, Benjamin 15-5-53-0; B C Hollioake 13-1-47-1; Butcher 13-4-39-3; A J Hollioake 1-1-0-0; Salisbury 11.3-7-7-4

SURREY: First Innings
M A Butcher not out ... 70
J D Ratcliffe not out ... 85
Extras (b 4, lb 1, nb 2) ... 7
Total (no wkt, 44 overs) ... 162

G P Thorpe, *A J Hollioake, A D Brown, N Shahid, B C Hollioake, †J N Batty, I D K Salisbury, M P Bicknell and J E Benjamin to bat

BOWLING: Giddins 12-2-38-0, Brown 9-0-47-0, Munton 8-1-29-0; Welch 6-2-11-0, Smith 9-2-32-0.

Bonus points: Surrey 4, Warwickshire 1

Umpires: J C Balderstone and D R Shepherd.

NO PLAY YESTERDAY: Old Trafford: Lancashire v Middlesex. Leicester: Leicestershire v Worcestershire.

Sharjah Cup Final

One-day international

Australia v India

SHARJAH (India won toss): Australia have scored 272 for nine wickets against India

AUSTRALIA
M E Waugh c Mongia b Agarkar ... 7
†A C Gilchrist c Mongia b Kanitkar ... 45
R T Ponting c Mongia b Prasad ... 1
T M Moody c Mongia b Agarkar ... 1
M G Bevan run out ... 45
*S R Waugh c Agarkar b Kanitkar ... 70
D S Lehmann c Sanghvi b Kumble ... 70
D R Martyn run out ... 16
S K Warne not out ... 6
M S Kasprowicz c Kanitkar b Prasad ... 0
D W Fleming not out ... 1
Extras (b 4, lb 3, w 2, nb 1) ... 10
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) ... 272

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-18, 2-19, 3-26, 4-85, 5-121, 6-224, 7-255, 8-263, 9-264.

BOWLING: Prasad 10-1-32-2, Agarkar 8-0-81-2, Kumble 10-1-46-1, Kanitkar 10-0-58-2; Sanghvi 10-0-45-0, Laxman 1-0-11-0, Tendulkar 1-0-12-0

Umpires: J Akhtar (Pak) and S Buckner (West Indies)

☐ Pakistan reportedly want Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka captain, to be their next coach. Ranatunga, 34, who led Sri Lanka to victory in the 1996 World Cup, is planning to retire from after defending it next year. He was quoted yesterday in a Colombo newspaper thanking Majid Khan, the Pakistan cricket board chief executive, for making him the offer. "Khan is confident that I am the man to put Pakistan's individual brilliance together."



Harmison: four wickets



Bowen: five wickets

SPORT IN BRIEF

Australia stunned by defeat

■ **RUGBY LEAGUE:** Robbie Paul, of Bradford Bulls, scored the third of four tries in a stunning 22-16 upset of Australia by New Zealand in Auckland yesterday. It was Australia's first match as a unified side in three years since the peace deal between the Super League and Australian Rugby League and a severe disappointment for them.

■ **HOCKEY: England will almost certainly be missing their injured striker, Tina Cullen, when they attempt to preserve their unbeaten record and keep a third successive clean sheet against United States in the four nations tournament in Springfield, Massachusetts today. Cullen's badly bruised eye is still closed after being hit on the cheek-bone by the ball in practice on Monday.**

■ **MOTOR RACING:** David Leslie, in a Nissan, topped the timesheets at Silverstone yesterday afternoon in final official testing for the third and fourth rounds of the *Auto Trader* RAC British Touring Car Championship this weekend.

■ **CYCLING: Jeremy Hunt, Britain's national sprint champion, who is based in France with the Banesto team, heads a full entry of 120 riders in the Pro-Cam 160 miles starting today at Beverley.**

هكذا من الاصل

Time to praise those who turn mediocrity into a thing of beauty

It is the superfluous things for which men sweat.
Seneca, *Epistulae ad Lucillium*.

DANNY BAKER



Hail Shrewsbury! They have done it again.

I once made, or rather voiced-over, a rotten video called *Whose Season Is It Anyway?* My only contributions were the title and a vague outline for the project, which intended to show that Henry Ford's oft-quoted "History is bunk" applied just as much to a soccer season as the wider procession of time.

The logic behind it was this. As a definitive chronicle of experience, there is no such thing as a football season. There are as many "football seasons" as there are football clubs and, understandable though it may be, the annual media scrambling at this time of year to pump up the volume around promotion and relegation issues can only truly excite those who are actual supporters of the handful of teams concerned or else the unaligned armchair fan, not forgetting the weak in the head.

That Arsenal may eventually be champions, or Manchester City go down may be interesting, possibly exciting, but it is always going to be secondary to the fortunes of the side we actually follow and have forked out to watch these past nine months. Arsenal doing the double is not the big story from where I stand and it will merely become a reference marker so as to pinpoint that disastrous year that we had 81 first-team players and a ground so quiet that many fans complained about the comparative tumult from the chapel of rest next door.

Let me explain further. Right now in London, every other taxi has started sporting revolting little red and white ribbons from their aerials and only on Thursday I saw a barrel chest wrapped in the wretched Arsenal strip as far south as Waterloo. Similarly, I am very reliably informed that one of the top controllers at BBC Radio 1 has been turning up for crucial planning meetings wearing an old and voluminous Notts County scarf, thus making a farce out of the necessary solemnity vital to such administration.

Such flagrant showboating after the event can only hint at the shallowness of the individuals concerned. They are not identifying themselves with a football team. They are identifying themselves with newspaper headlines and unchecked television coverage. They are the tourists of the football season, fans of fortune, glory hunters and boobs. Anyone can pitch up at Highbury, Nottingham Forest or Watford right now. It is virtual supporting, fandom on the autopilot. Come to that, the Hindenburg-type form of Bolton, Spurs, Hull, Burnley or Portsmouth lends itself equally to all kinds of fly-by-night turnstile show-offs and parvenus. People *are* going to turn up at those games.

If one wishes to see the real stalwart in action, to glimpse football supporting in the raw, to gaze upon fans and say, with a lump in the throat: "These people have looked upon the true season and they are still here," then one must turn toward the mid-table washouts. Those clubs that have been hustling and bustling for three quarters of a year and nobody knows why. They are not going up; they are not going down. But they are still playing.

Arise West Brom and Oxford! Come into the light mighty Blackpool and Wigan! Walk tall Leicester and Derby! Hats off to St Johnstone, Greenock ! Morton, East Fife and Albion. Yet, even among these invisible greats, there is one name that stands alone. For no other club in Great Britain so beautifully represents the mothballed magnificence of mid-table existence than Shrewsbury Town.

For Shewsbury Town have perfected the art of pointless exertion to almost a science. That they presently lie thirteenth out of the 24 clubs in their division is a given, but the breathtaking symmetry with which they appear to be closing yet another year cannot be allowed to pass without the fullest encomium:

SHREWSBURY TOWN

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
44	16	12	16	61	60	60

That things appear, in 1997-98, to be coasting to a pointlessly rounded and pleasing futility is noteworthy enough, but Shrewsbury have been pulling off the soccer equivalent of one-handed clapping for almost two decades, on and off. Indeed, this year's display of feckless genius is as nothing compared to the Sisyphean season that was 1995-96.

During that campaign, not only did they manage to turn the rest of their division into mere gyrating parentheses as usual, but they did it with a squad who were, without question, the most anonymous to appear in the four English divisions. No battle-scarred old pros, no interesting young prospects, no faded former stars, no notable eccentrics. In a final flourish of absurdity, it must also be recorded that the entire Shrewsbury squad for that season were, without exception, 5ft 10in tall.

Now, I ask you, how can a tale like this remain unsung until now? When this staggering monument to inutility was first brought to my attention, by Shrewsbury supporters themselves, I made them a promise that it would become my life's work to raise awareness of the world's dullest team and the heroic effort entailed in actually cheering them on. I hope this goes some way to making good that promise.

So, today, as noisy Arsenal take the field for their sold-out set-to against fighting Barnsley and carwreck Tottenham become involved in a life-or-death struggle with crash-dummy Newcastle, some of us shall be silently saluting the goalless draw that Shrewsbury will cleverly hang on for at Scarborough (thus, not affecting their goal difference while nicely adding another combination of a 1 and a 6 to their status). Of course, there will be Shrewsbury supporters there, even though the game is of absolutely no relevance to them. Tomorrow the match will be barely acknowledged and soon another season unexamined will come to a close.

No I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was I meant to be,
I am an attendant lord,
One who will do
To swell a progress.
Start a scene or two . . .

T. S. Eliot

It's the best bar none

FACT: There is a pub in Hertfordshire that offers "the total football" experience when showing live games on the big screen. By the stacking of palette boards it has created a rude "terracing" in its main bar that is proving extremely popular. It even segregates supporters with side-on scatter cushions.



FACT: When The Beatles played Shea Stadium in New York, above, John Lennon asked if it had been named after Halifax Town's Shay. He received the reply "probably"

Go easy on the spirits

If ever there was a prime example of the old expression "lose a tenner and find a fiver", it was illustrated by Glenn Hoddle's week. Yes, England won, but in a crackpot game during which I got the feeling — last experienced when I saw Shane Ritchie wearing purple suede gloves — that nothing really matters.

Portugal played like they had Manchester City's survival instincts and Scotland's luck. England, on the other hand, should have worn Brazil's kit. This would have been perfect because it is only ever seen on two teams: the South American masters themselves and Crystal Palace. Between the two lay England's performance.

Still, there's no denying that Wednesday was A Good Thing — if it had been a World Cup match we'd be flying high, no matter how it was achieved. Glenn finds his fiver. The tenner was lost and remains lost since the disclosure that the England squad have their very own quack, the type that has had columnists and gag-writers pumping up cushions and upgrading holiday plans; 4-4-2 and defensive walls usurped by pinned dolls. All very easy and all very good.

What is less palatable is the hypocritical outrage expressed by thousands of football fans over the idea that Glenn has resorted to the occult. "He's making monkeys out of our boys and our national game and us," seems to be the thread. Oh yeah, right. Like football supporters don't invoke secret rituals and call upon any amount of false gods during every single kick of every single game.

For instance, I am going to reveal something now I have never told a living soul before. When I am at the New Den, should my eyes look upon the big digital clock in the corner, I cannot look away until the number it shows is divisible by five. So, 3.48 no good, 3.50 good. You see, my favourite number is five and I believe it will bring favourable omens to the game in progress. That my side are peering over the rim of relegation has not shaken my belief.

I can only shudder to think what might be our situation if I abandoned the belief. I would feel that I should be locked up were it not that everybody has these madcap mores going on. Everybody. I have been at matches where the loss of a two-goal lead has been blamed on somebody sitting in a different seat after they came back from the toilet. Penalties have been conceded because hats were removed. Deadly rivals have triumphed in far-off fixtures because the radio was taken to a different room. To this day I cannot say "Crystal Palace" without shortly afterwards saying Millwall three times under my breath.

Let me embarrass my father now. My dad is a big bloke, an ex-docker who sort of looks like the late Bernard Bresslaw. He is not known for his flexible views on things that resist eating, wearing or seeing. Yet he remains convinced that, when watching a game on television, he can, during corners and free kicks, protect the goal of a team he favours by sitting up on the arm of whatever chair he occupies at the time.

I could go on and I'm sure you can supply me with even more outlandish variations. The point is we must lay off Glenn Hoddle and his Powerful Quack. If England do make an early exit from the World Cup it'll be no good tying her to a ducking stool or burning barmy old Glenn at the stake. Own up. Come clean. You'll just be furious because your lucky gobstopper and grandfather's magic mitten let you down.

PREDICTION: Teddy Sheringham will go to Middlesbrough for £2 million.

New song strikes wrong note with fans

The official England World Cup single came out this week and a vapid old string of derivatives it is. Everyone is quite rightly rallying round *Three Lions* again, although the idea that it had been banned and is therefore some kind of martyr symbol is heading out of control. You will find it freely available in record shops next to the other one and the likelihood remains remote that Lancaster Gate goon squads will be waiting outside Our Price like junta heavies at polling stations during "free" Third World elections.

Up until *Three Lions*, nobody looked to official releases to cue the terraces into song and things have simply reverted to how they should be. Why did *Three Lions* click? Perhaps because it was not some dumb-cluck "unifying" cheer. For once, a record was about the experience of supporting. It was personal, not dribbling on generically about the happy, smiley game or "the boys" we all love.

"Thirty years of hurt/Never stopped ME dreaming"... "I know they can play"... "I remember three lions"... "They are so sure England's going to blow it..." All top drawer basic psychology — and a catchy tune.

The problem with most official English merchandise — and not just football paraphernalia — is that it seems too embarrassed to crow unless someone gets a whiff of Empire and shrieks "reactionary!" But what good is a stirring anthem that is too emotionally hamstrung to actually stir?

Every year I write to Graham Kelly and also to *Melody Maker* begging them to get behind a rerelease of Ivor Novello's *Rose of England* (the Ivor Emanuel rendition) from the show *The Crest of a Wave*. It could take on both *Abide with Me* and *Sailing* with one hand tied behind its back. No Englishman exposed to it can keep a still jaw or dry eye.

If the BBC doesn't adopt it during June, then the lesson they learnt with *Nessun Dorma* went right over their heads. Football supporters crave more *Last Night of the Proms* and less *Top of the Pops*, believe me. Lyrics about "warriors who served thee of old" will always score over "we're gong to France to do our best" or whatever flaccid message the FA is meekly trying to push.

The French will, of course, attempt to reply with Johnny Halliday or Charles Trenet, the Brazilians with Antonio Carlos Jobim and the Germans will hastily remix anything by Kraftwerk. But it will all be in vain. A crushing blow will have been dealt them all, even before a ball has been kicked.

☐ **Danny Baker is on Talk Radio (1053-1089am) every Saturday at 11.30am and 5.30pm.**

GOLF

Olazabal prey to bad driving

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN BARCELONA

THERE is only one weakness in José María Olazábal's game, but it is a bad one. It is his driving. A wild tee shot on the 72nd hole ended any chance that he had of winning the Masters in 1991. On Thursday, on the first hole in the Spanish Open at El Prat, Olazábal hit a drive that went 125 yards. Sergio Gomez, his manager, was among the spectators who watched the ball disappear into trees and ricochet around. "The ball, it went ping-pong, boom-boom," Gomez said.

Olazábal retains a slight chance of winning his first Spanish Open on a course where he has already won four other titles, but, at seven under par, he is seven strokes behind the Australians, Robert Allenby and Greg Chalmers, the joint-leaders.

These past few months, Olazábal has played well. He has won once and not been worse than seventeenth in three other tournaments on the European Tour. He came twelfth in the Masters. Seven strokes do not represent an insurmountable lead, but he needs to improve his accuracy from the tee on a course where almost every hole is lined by pine trees.

Olazábal, who had been six under par overnight, birdied three of the first five holes of his second round and was nine under par after 27 holes. The spectators following him, Bernhard Langer and Carl Suneson, were appreciative of his skill. Also watching for a while was Mike Stewart, the tournament director, who told Suneson that he had taken too long over his second shot at the 5th and that the trio had fallen six minutes behind those ahead.

They speeded up noticeably after this warning and perhaps this was why Olazábal became wilder off the tee. At the 9th, he hit a low, slightly hooked drive that travelled only three-quarters the distance it should have done. On the 10th, Olazábal tried to bend the ball from right to left and saw it dive into the left rough.

El Prat is a very noisy course, for planes take off from the nearby Barcelona airport every few minutes. "You have really got to concentrate on your concentration," Allenby, who had a 64, said. During Olazábal's round it was possible to see him puffing out as a plane lumbered into the air a few hundred feet above the green while marshals held up signs asking for silence.

And then there was the constant chirp of mobile telephones. Joakim Haeggman was so distracted as one rang while he was about to putt during his round of 70, that he backed off and shouted, angrily.

Olazábal's best stroke of the day came at the 17th, where his seven-iron shot ended six inches from the hole, but his 71 was one stroke more than the round of Sergio García, the young Spanish amateur.

"If the weather stays the same, then a score of 15 under par for the final two rounds is perfectly possible here," Gordon Brand Jr, who is one of five men on 11 under, said. Whether Olazábal can score that well will depend on his driving.

Scores 41

People's champion enlists help to land snooker's top prize

White winning mind games

BY PHIL YATES

AN ENTHUSIASTIC office junior at Advance Training, a Preston-based firm of business enhancement experts, could have been inadvertently responsible for the first-round elimination of Stephen Hendry from the Embassy world championship in Sheffield.

It was early February when a newspaper article previewing the Benson and Hedges Masters caught his attention. It centred around Jimmy White, snooker's archetypal underachiever. White's wavering concentration at the table was its recurrent theme.

The piece was brought to the attention of more senior staff and a letter offering assistance was sent to White. He responded within two days, a meeting was arranged and an on-going relationship was cemented.

On Thursday, White, whose disciplined approach and focus when placed under pressure was a revelation, defeated Hendry, a player who has ruthlessly punished him in past campaigns at The Crucible, 10-4 to reach the second round of the game's blue-riband event.

"When we saw the article about Jimmy, my partners and I realised that here was a guy who had the opportunity to improve himself and, like any plc, swell his profitability and success rate," Mike Finnegan, whose company specialises in enhancing achievement within the commercial sector, said.

"I spent a couple of days watching Jimmy practise and generally monitoring his daily life. After that, I made around 75 observations of which 50 were errors on his part and required changes. Without being specific, he's made those alterations and I'm proud of him for that.

"Although we use and apply psychology, we aren't academics, we are real-world businessmen. I think Jimmy's adapted to our mind techniques, but it's no good if you haven't got the strength of will and desire to make them work for you."

White said: "I've had loads of sports psychologists trying to help me over the years, but they didn't know anything about snooker. That's not what these guys are aiming at. They're all about pumping people up, company chairmen and the like. They've made me very positive and together. I wish I'd met them years ago."

White, who had failed to beat Hendry in 15 attempts since 1994, continues his quest for a title that has proved agonisingly elusive against Darren Morgan today.

Suggestions that White might suffer a reaction to victory over Hendry are not without foundation. In between practice and extensive media commitments yesterday, he took time out to see *As Good as It Gets* at a nearby cinema. Millions will be hoping that the film's title is in no way prophetic.

Steve Davis, at 40 the only player at the Crucible older than White, narrowly avoided the ignominy of being defeated in the championship with a full session to spare for the second year in succession.

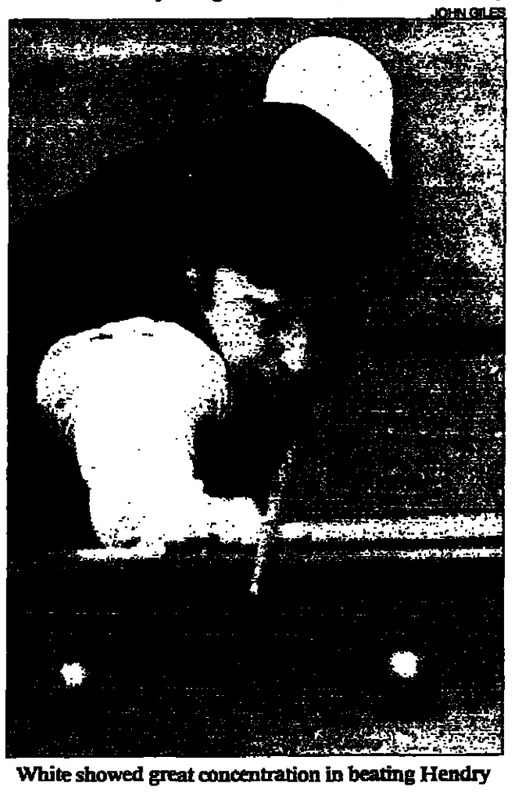
Davis, drubbed 13-3 by Ken Doherty in the second round last year, was heading for an identical fate against Mark Williams when the Masters champion quickly converted a 5-3 overnight lead into 11-3.

Williams put together breaks of 63 and 102, stole the tenth frame by clearing brown to black in three separate visits and, when Davis missed a straightforward black at 47-0 in the thirteenth frame, Williams cleared with 71.

At 11-3 down, Davis played as if he had nothing to lose. He sped uncharacteristically through the fifteenth frame in only six minutes and the sixteenth was snatched, from 54-0 adrift, on the pink in only nine. Even so, Davis resumes this morning requiring eight of the remaining nine frames to reach the quarter-finals.

John Higgins, who will supplant Hendry as the world No 1 should he collect the £220,000 first prize, showed a vast improvement on his ineffective form of the first session to draw level with Anthony Hamilton, of Nottingham, at 8-8. Trailing 6-2 after the opening exchanges on Thursday, Higgins needed a confidence-boosting start. A total clearance of 131 provided that and further contributions of 41, 71 and 80 helped him enter the concluding phase of the contest holding the psychological high ground.

The turning point came with Hamilton 7-4 and 39-0 ahead in the twelfth frame. With the reds invitingly fanned, Hamilton missed a straightforward pot using the rest. Higgins replied with a clearance of 71 and went on to end the morning with his deficit erased.



JOHN GILES

White showed great concentration in beating Hendry

TENNIS

Korda's defeat lifts Sampras

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN MONTE CARLO

THE world rankings system, instituted in 1973, became a hostage to ridicule here yesterday when Pete Sampras returned to the summit despite his abject defeat by Fabrice Santoro on Thursday.

This bizzare scenario unfolded when Petr Korda succumbed to Richard Krajicek in the quarter-final of the Monte Carlo Open and thus squandered the opportunity to claim the No 1 position for himself. Marcelo Rios, the man deposed by Sampras, is not here playing because of injury.

If you are confused, you may not be for much longer. The ATP Tour, which governs the men's game, proposes to scrap the 12-month rolling rankings system in 2000 and replace it with a calendar-year points race. Such a system, it is said, would make the game easier for the public to understand and put an end to anomalies such as the one involving Sampras, Korda and Rios this week.

Sampras denounced the present mechanism after his defeat by Santoro. "People don't understand the rankings system," he said. "It took me a couple of years to figure it out myself." But he observed, correctly, that the world rankings only mattered at the season's conclusion.

In that respect, the existing and proposed mechanisms would reach precisely the same conclusions. The present system confuses only when single weeks are taken in isolation, but what it does provide is a largely meaningful guide to a player's ability at any given time. The fact that only 14 individuals have topped the rankings in 25 years emphasises just how worthy is the honour.

Certainly Rios, the newest incumbent, has not yet won a grand-slam title, but he will have to do that to hold sway at the year's end. By contrast, the new system simply could not be taken seriously until the second half of the year. Consider the case of Todd Martin, who is world-ranked at No 35 but who would be No 11 in the proposed new order. Decent fellow that he is, Martin would surely shy at the implication of his place in the world list. Furthermore, even if the new structure is adopted, seedings for all tournaments would still be established from the old rankings.

Krajicek will advance his position after getting the better of Korda in a match of wild fluctuations. Korda looked in total control in the opening set and then recovered an early break to take the second into a tie-break.

Yet Krajicek, increasingly aggressive, saved his best for this passage of the contest. Four booming first serves prevented Korda from conjuring a single return and some bold fencing against Korda's service saw Krajicek run away with the tie-break 7-1. He got stronger thereafter to run out an impressive 4-6, 7-6, 6-1 winner and today plays the in-form Carlos Moyá, who beat Alex Corretja by 6-3, 6-2.

The all-French quarter-final between Santoro and Cedric Pioline saw the latter recover from an opening-set blitz to win 1-6, 6-2, 6-4. He next meets Alberto Berasategui, of Spain, who beat Boris Becker 6-7, 7-5, 6-1.

Results 41

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

The Lancashire lad who grew on Barnsley

Mark Hodkinson on how Danny Wilson crossed county boundaries and gained Yorkshire affections



The boy who done well: Wilson celebrates Barnsley's promotion last year with, behind, memorabilia from his years with Billinge, Wigan and Bury

LIFE AT THE TOP

BARNSLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

The match-day attire is strictly formal — club blazer, club tie, white shirt, smart trousers. During the week, he prefers a training top and a pair of shorts. Stitched into the cloth is "D.W.", but "G.O.D." might be more appropriate.

Danny Wilson walks on water. To suggest otherwise in the pubs, clubs or supermarkets around Barnsley, or certain parts of Lancashire, is to summon a lynch mob to your door. Aside from being a god in a tracksuit, Wilson may soon find himself declared a piece of public art. A campaign is under way to erect a statue of him in Barnsley town centre. "What he has done for the town is unbelievable," Alan Bloore, the chairman of the Barnsley Supporters' Club, said. "He has transformed the place, put us on the map. I think something should be done like this, why not?"

During Barnsley's fraught season, Wilson's composure has marked him out as a man of integrity. There has been no petulance or pettiness. In the heat of battle, he has loosened his collar, mustered a half-smile and spoken candidly, but without rancour. He does not have the vaudevillian charisma of a Ron Atkinson, but possesses a charm of his own. It is understated, considered and his gaze meets yours unflinchingly, incisively. Most of all, he is admired because he is perceived as being true to himself.

Of course, before the throng of notebooks or beneath the glow of television lights, there are a few seconds of contemplation, a chance to loosen up the muscles clinging to hot-wired bones. On the eve of a crucial league game, however, when your sister has just called to say a reporter is snooping around your home town, the emotions are raw and the words trip over themselves wantonly. "Are you the person asking for information about Danny Wilson?" he asked. I recognised the voice immediately. "Is that you, Danny?"

We had met a few weeks earlier and "clicked" immediately, talking about football long after the allotted interview time. The *Wigan Evening Post* has carried a short item to help to round up some of Wilson's pals from his days as a young footballer. I explained to him that my motives were wholesome, it was merely research for this column, nothing sinister or traitorous. His manner was aggressive, perhaps understandably so. Someone, without his knowledge, was — as he saw it — raking through private matters.

I phoned him several times the following week, but my calls were not returned. I sent him a conciliatory letter, apologising for the misunderstanding. Eventually, I received a two-line note: "I have no power to stop you doing anything you wish if you feel it will make good reading, it is entirely your decision." It was, it appeared, the death of a nascent friendship. It was perfunctory, not hinting at forgiveness or reconciliation.

Ironically, the response to my newspaper appeal brought forth a thunderous song of praise. The boy done well and their pride is writ large across Lancashire. Wilson is decent and moral, they said, trustworthy and loyal to his roots. He has crossed no one. Ever. Until now.

Wilson is cut from the same rough stone as the managerial greats of British football. He was born to working class parents, Jim and Annie Wilson, who settled in Billinge, Lancashire, after Jim left the Royal Navy to work as a forklift truck driver. "Danny wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth, far from it," Mike Taylor, the former secretary of the Wigan amateur league, said. "There has never been anyone holding his hand, he has had to fend for himself."

As a teenager, Wilson played for the league's representative side. "I see him now and I think he is the smartest-looking manager in the Premier League, speaking in measured tones," Taylor said. "He has done well because he has the brains to listen and learn and soak it all up."

David Denner played alongside Wilson for Billinge FC. "He was very mature for his age. He would gee people up, help them out if they were having a bad time," he said. "He was so good that he became a marked man and took some stick. I cannot recall him ever losing his temper, though."

Sunderland signed Wilson on associate schoolboy forms, but did not offer him an apprenticeship because they felt that he was too small. "He was very, very disappointed," Brian Hughes, the coach of Double Seven Youth Club, for whom he also played, said. "He didn't get too down, though, he wasn't that type of lad. He never complained."

Hughes worked as a cheese wholesaler and the team sometimes travelled to matches in his van. Another mode of transport was the back of a coal wagon, when Wilson played for Birchley St Mary's on Sunday afternoons. "He roughed it with the rest of us. He was small and unassuming, but he would take on players who were much bigger than him without a second thought," Eric Littler, the manager, said.

After leaving school, Wilson joined his father at Ravenhead brickworks. Friends sensed that he was disillusioned about a career in the professional game. Geoff Kearsley, another Billinge FC player, was driving home one evening when he caught sight of Wilson. "It was absolutely bucketing down and I saw this hunched figure with a haversack on his back," he said. "I remember him saying: 'There's no way I'm doing this for the rest of my bloody life.' He was a professional at Bury within six months.

> A campaign is under way to erect a statue in the town centre. He has put Barnsley on the map

Wilson made just seven full appearances for Wigan Athletic before joining Bury. He had a nomadic playing career, turning out for seven clubs before arriving at Oakwell from Sheffield Wednesday in the close season of 1993. "He was the most hated man in Barnsley when he first came," Bloore said. "They used to boo when his name was read out, but he stuck at it and he won people over."

Some of Wilson's friends have been surprised to see a reserved personality develop a flinty sheen of self-confidence. Others, though, have recognised the influence of two decades in the game. "He's never been in any other industry. He knows it back to front," Kearsley said. "He knows which players are with him and the ones who are peeing up his back." One senior Barnsley player hinted at a firmness, an unequivocal self-belief that is vital for managerial success. "Aye, Danny will let you have your say, but you will have to do it his way all the same," he said.

Serie A showdown can be World Cup pointer

In-form forwards, Del Piero and Ronaldo, prepare to face each other as Juventus take on Internazionale

Turin prepares for the mother of all matches tomorrow — Juventus against Internazionale, with just one point dividing them at the top of Serie A.

It provides a chance to compare Alessandro del Piero and Ronaldo, two players who could decide the destiny of the World Cup this summer. Del Piero played half a game for Italy in Parma on Wednesday, when they beat Paraguay 3-1. His form in the European Cup, which has brought him ten goals, has been spectacular.

Ronaldo, after a hiccup in mid-season, has justified lately his selection as the Fifa world player of the year, making goals out of nothing, whether playing in Milan, Rome or Moscow. To his superb technique, he allies remarkable anticipation and exceptional speed of thought and movement, putting him through defences in the blink of an eye.

On Wednesday, he should be playing for Brazil against Argentina, a game which is likely to be friendly in name only. Argentina strolled past Ireland in Dublin in midweek. Their 2-0 victory — and that of Croatia, who brushed Poland aside 4-1 in Osijek — is grim news for Glenn Hoddle, since his England side will almost certainly meet one team or the other in the next round should they survive their qualifying group in France.

England's 3-0 win over Portugal should not disguise the fact that David Seaman had to give a display to match his finest in Euro 96.

If England have now a rampant Alan Shearer, Argentina have Gabriel Batistuta, who scored his 37th international goal in Dublin, not to mention the greatly gifted Ariel Ortega, who is confirming the promise that he showed in the United States in 1994.

As for the Croatians, their attack would be far less forgiving to England's suspect defence than the Portuguese. To the threat of Alen Boksic may now be added that of Mario Stanic, whom Parma have pushed up from midfield this season. He hit two goals against Poland, Boksic scored once and the other went to Zvonimir Boban, the formidable AC Milan midfield player.

What price Germany? They could squeeze through only 1-0 in Cologne against a Nigeria team that its new coach, Bora Milutinovic, that wily old hand of World Cups, had only just brought together. Jürgen Klinsmann did not make the team, logically enough on his current form, as Germany favoured the strike partnership of Oliver Bierhoff and Ulf Kirsten. Andy Möller scored the only goal, but he has been strongly criticised for holding the ball too long and making little use of it. It is as well for Germany that the little Thomas Hässler, that other durable midfield player, is in such fine form.

As for the Nigerians, we have not yet seen the best of them. Nwankwo Kanu has recovered almost miraculously from his heart operation and may well play for Inter in Turin tomorrow. Milutinovic, meanwhile, has resuscitated the career of Rachidi Yekini, the veteran striker, now playing in Zurich.

Francesco Moriero, scorer of two goals for Italy, showed again how useful he can be to them. The 29-year-old right flanker, nurtured at Lecce, is the late developer personified. Joining Inter this season virtually as a make-weight, he has flourished beyond all expectation. He, too, should be on parade in Turin tomorrow, a player capable of doing everything that Angelo di Livio has done up and down the Italy right wing.

Can Gianfranco Zola get back into the Italy squad? Competition for places in attack is ferocious. Four strikers were used in Parma — Del Piero, Christian Vieri, Fabrizio Ravanelli and Pierluigi Casiraghi, who may well be on his way to Chelsea. Lazio, where he is at present, seem to be signing every star striker imaginable, including Marcelo Salas, who scored for Chile in a 2-2 draw in Santiago against Colombia. Dejan Stankovic, the 21-year-old Yugoslav, scorer of two goals this week against South Korea, is on his way and may be joined in Rome by Del Piero. Boksic and Roberto Mancini are there already. No wonder Casiraghi wants to move.

And England? The roar of delight that went up when Michael Owen belatedly took the field told its own story. In the significant words of the late Matt Busby: "If you don't put them in, you can't know what you've got."


Del Piero hones his skills before taking on Ronaldo


BRIAN GLANVILLE

Radio ham who plays the joker to enliven Saturday

Michael Henderson doffs his hat to a commentator who takes neither himself nor football too seriously

Let's hear it for Stuart Hall! As another football season prepares to take its leave, the honey-tongued wordsmith of the wireless stands a man alone. In an age of verbal austerity, he brings a welcome touch of levity to Radio 5 Live, a province of the radio kingdom colonised by some frightfully earnest young scruffs.

Hall's colourful reporting has attracted more than its fair share of ridicule for 30 years, but it has also provided rich entertainment and this is a good time to commend him. His unashamedly romantic style is so much at odds with the new breed of radio reporter that he may feel like the Last of the Mohicans.

Alan Green can be excluded from general criticism. A vivid commentator, and an extremely good one, he quite outshines dull-as-ditchwater Mike Ingham, who is the football correspondent and yet seems to hold no opinions on anything. We can also leave out troopers like Ron Jones, who dares to speak decent English, and Pat Murphy, who has been known to venture an unflattering opinion or three.

Not all the younger chaps lack talent. Some are perfectly capable, but too many sound like sixth-formers doing community work and talk in a disagreeably reductive way. A case in point is the bod who presents the Saturday flagship programme, *Sport on Five*. What possessed the BBC to promote Ian Payne, with his aversion to verbs and chummy manner, to fill the seat once occupied by Des Lynam, is a mystery.

Listeners have grown accustomed to him fawning over football managers so, when Hall comes on from Ewood Park or wherever, and talks of the "rrr-rollicking, rrr-rumbustious rrr-romp" he has just witnessed, as he did the other week, it does the heart good. It is all an act, and he knows that we know, but what the heck! To Hall the game has always been a bit of a lark and a spot of embroidery is part of the fun. By making the humdrum sound miraculous, he has, like Leonard Sachs before him, added to the gaiety of the nation.

Everybody remembers their favourite Hall moments. There was once a game at Goodison Park when an Everton player scored "with insouciance" from 30 yards. As you do! Another time, at


Hall: he's a knockout

Old Trafford, Hall delivered an encomium to Lou Macari and added, as an afterthought, that in between United's goals, Coventry had "sneaked a couple" themselves. In fact, they had done pretty well to draw!

Last year, there was a brilliant piece of reporting from Oldham, when he invert-ed Mark Twain's famous crack about the San Francisco weather to convey how cold it was at Boundary Park. Evidently unfamiliar with this pay-off line, Payne was utterly wrong-footed and could only respond: "I didn't know that Mark Twain had ever been to Oldham."

Hall's finest moment this year followed a Manchester City defeat at Maine Road, when he put it to Joe Royle: "Come on, Joe, this lot are not good enough. You've got 54 players on the books and hardly one of them is worth a light." After the amiable banalities of Jimmy Armfield, who has never seen a bad game in his life, such honesty is music to the ears.

Bravo, then, Mr Hall! You play your joker every week and listeners are titter-happy. May your jester's stick never go limp.

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FOOTBALL SATURDAY

Overmars spreads wings as Arsenal touch rare heights



Overmars reflects wistfully on his time with Ajax, where winning became a habit. Now he has settled at Highbury, he knows further glory awaits. Photograph: Marc Aspland

OLIVER HOLT



I left Marc Overmars as he was about to sit down to lunch with the rest of his Arsenal team-mates yesterday. Before I went, a half-remembered snippet of some potted biography rushed back to me and I asked him if it was true that he liked collecting butterflies. His face went blank and then he smiled his thin, puzzled smile. "No," he said.

It had seemed to make sense at the time. Overmars is a wispy, slight sort of man, delicate and fragile. He floats before he stings. There is something almost bewitchingly elusive about him, something melancholy about the beauty of his skill, something that makes him hard to catch even with a net spread wide.

Time and again, he slips through your grasp. A few months ago, he told me that he liked cars. Not the fast, flash cars that you might expect, the Ferraris of a Teddy Sheringham or the Porsches of a David Beckham, but sleek, old cars, E-Type Jaguars and those ungainly Mercedes with the exaggerated wings. He said he had an old Jaguar back in Holland.

Back then, he had said he was looking forward to finding a vintage car museum now that he had come to England. And so yesterday I asked him if he had found one. "I tried once, but I got lost," he said. "Then, there was an exhibition of them on somewhere, but I did not have the time."

Looking for Overmars, like marking him, is like being one of Kafka's characters: always searching, never finding. He drifts one way, then another, just the way he glides deceptively across penalty areas from left to right, always just out of reach, never quite in range. He is a quiet man, an enigma.

He has the dark, brooding looks of a playboy but the haunted stare and furrowed brow of one who is troubled. He drives his car through England's country lanes to relax and he is getting good at snooker. He has never been to the theatre. "I will have to try it sometime," he said. "I don't know if it is for me."

There is nothing cussed about him. Quite the opposite. He is eager to help. He talks earnestly and sincerely and it is impossible not to like him and be intrigued by him. But he is not an extrovert, like so many of his kind. He has none of the dynamism that seems to course through so many wingers and imbue them with the individuality that gives them their unpredictability. It is as if his lightning speed and dazzling runs suck every ounce of creativity and verve out of him.

There was a time earlier in the season when people doubted him, when full backs such as Stephen Carr, of Tottenham Hotspur, and Gary Breen, of Coventry City, were able to stop him just by holding on to him and hauling him down. Some said he had not been the success that everyone had hoped for. Now, as Arsenal home in on the double and the memory of that precious winning goal he scored against Manchester United at Old Trafford last month is still vivid, it is obvious that he has been worth every penny of the reputed £7 million that Arsène Wenger paid Ajax for him in the summer. This afternoon, it is Barnsley's turn to try to cope with his speed and his trickery.

When the critics were thinking about turning on him as Arsenal suffered their mid-season dip and everyone wrote them out of the championship, his team-mates shook their heads. Steve Bould, seeing everything on the field in front of him, noted how his pace stretched defences so much that it created the space in which Dennis Bergkamp, Ian Wright and Nicolas Anelka could work their own magic.

Now those days of doubt have gone and Overmars, 25, is getting the credit that he deserves, along with the rest of the Arsenal midfield. With Ray Parlour ploughing his own furrow on the right, their forging runs down the flanks have been as important as the central midfield solidity provided by Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit.

> 'Some people doubted him, but as the double beckons it is clear that he was worth every penny'

Overmars had grown accustomed to winning prizes with Ajax under the tutelage of Louis van Gaal, so used to success that he and his team-mates would "go whistling onto the field, expecting to win 3-1 or 4-1 because we were so confident".

With Arsenal ever closer to the FA Carling Premiership title, though, Overmars retreats into the sanctuary of caution. "After one or two months in England, I started to play better and then I started scoring goals," he said. "You just need a couple of months and I think that is quite fast to adapt.

"At the start, I was substituted a few times because I had given so much in the first hour that I did not have enough power. Now, it is different.

"If you look at the team, we started very well and then we had a dip. In Holland, quite often there would be a dip after the winter break. With Ajax, we lost to a second division club in the cup once. At Arsenal, we gave it away a bit, but then we picked it up and we have been growing and growing — and at the end that is when the prizes are to be given away.

"There was a time when we had to win, when we desperately needed to win and, from that moment, we had a great run. We are still playing very well. People talk about the double, but at this moment we have got nothing. The teams we are playing in the league — Barnsley, Liverpool and Everton — will all be fighting for points for different reasons. That will make it extra tough."

Like Bergkamp, Overmars talks about his days with Ajax with a certain wistfulness, as though the Dutch club was his footballing alma mater. They were happy times, laden with domestic honours and the European Cup, but even then, when he talks about them as though he were staring lovingly at some sepia photograph of a lost age, he cannot help talking about the need for escape that somehow sums up the winger's psyche.

"We were so popular everywhere we went in Holland that it was unbelievable," he said. "We won so many prizes in those years, but we did not really enjoy it. I remember one day we won the European Cup final and the next day we were just training normally. Then I thought: 'Hey, we should get more enjoyment out of what we have done.'

"I played under Van Gaal for five years. He bought me from Willem II and he improved me a lot. He demands a lot, but you have to admire his energy. Every day he was sharp. He never missed anything in training. But there were times when there were too many orders. After a time, you wanted to do some things by instinct, not by the system."

The closest you ever get to capturing Overmars, to tying him down, to getting to the core of the man, is when he talks about his childhood, about how he developed the speed that first astonished English football fans when he burst past a startled defender in Holland's World Cup qualifying match with Graham Taylor's team at Wembley in 1993. "You'll never beat Des Walker," was never sung with the same conviction again.

"I don't know how quick I am," he says. "Times and things like that don't interest me. It's natural. I think I get it from my mum. I had a quick mum. My family used to live on a small farm in a small village and they used to work in the fields. I used to help my grandfather. He never had machines and he doesn't know about tractors, so when we went to get potatoes, they would tie a rope around my waist and I would run along with a tray behind me that they would pile the potatoes on. They used to tell me: 'Marc, it's good for you.' Each year, when the harvest came around, they phoned me and said: 'It's time.' "

Now, a rich harvest is promised and it is Marc Overmars's time again. He will keep running, you can be sure of that, running and running where no one can catch him: a butterfly not a keeper.

United to ease fit-again Keane back gently



Keane: itching to play

By David Maddock

IT IS a little like closing the stable door after the horse has bolted, but Manchester United finally received some good news yesterday in what has ultimately been a disappointing season. Roy Keane has been given the all-clear to return to action.

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, believes that the loss of Keane, in an FA Carling Premiership game away to Leeds United last September, played a significant part in handing — eventually — the championship initiative to Arsenal.

Now, though, with the title appearing to be a remote possibility, Ferguson will not rush the Ireland midfield player back. "We are all happy that Roy has been given the all-clear to play, but we have taken specialist advice and we don't feel the need to rush now," Ferguson said. "He will continue his rehabilitation in training and will return fit and strong next season."

For Keane, the news comes as a huge relief after a painful struggle to recover from the cruciate ligament injury that has sidelined him for seven months. There is a reserve team fixture at Old Trafford next week, but he will probably return only in a friendly tournament in Oslo at the end of July.

"There is no point in rushing now," Keane said. "Obviously I feel ready and I am itching to play, but I will understand if they decide to wait until the summer, because I realise they are only looking after my best interests. It will be hard for me and I would be lying if I said that the first 50-50 tackle wasn't in the back of my mind, but I have been out for so long and I am desperate for a game."

Ronny Johnsen, Keane's United team-mate, meanwhile, is unlikely to play again this season. The Norway defender underwent an operation yesterday to remove some cartilage that has troubled him for some weeks.

Johnsen believes he may be fit for United's last game of the campaign away to Barnsley, but Ferguson played down the prospects. "The lad has had the operation and, really, he is looking at a period of three or four weeks. But he should be OK for the World Cup finals," he said.

West Ham United have defended their decision to raise ticket prices by 20-30 per cent next season. Peter Storrie, the West Ham managing director, said that the club made the move in order to stay in contention for honours.

"It's a case of the players' wage bill going from £8 million to £11 million," Storrie said. "At the end of the day, we either want to bring success or we don't. I could drop the prices tomorrow, but obviously we would not be able to maintain this quality of squad. It has been a marvellous season and it has all come at once. We're bringing in top-quality players and increasing contracts for existing players and it's going to make a massive hit on our payroll costs in the new season."

Bates outburst touches nerve

By Kevin McCarra

THE outcome of the Bell's Scottish League premier division may be a riveting spectacle for those whose emotions are engaged, but some outsiders are unwilling to spare it a glance. Although Chelsea are to pay Brian Laudrup, the Rangers forward, some £30,000 a week for his services, Ken Bates, the chairman at Stamford Bridge, was dismissive of the stage on which the Dane has performed for the past four years.

"It's difficult to judge him when he's playing reserve team football every week," Bates said, before deriding the Old Firm's recent record in European competition. The chairman's remarks often have a bracing effect on a sport that can be suffocated by blandness, but the observations on Laudrup did leave Bates open to a riposte.

Why are they signing the player? "I don't know if the remarks were taken out of context," Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, said, "but it sounds as if the club are spending a lot of money on a player they are obviously not sure of. I am convinced that Laudrup will do very well at Chelsea."

Bates's opinions did touch a nerve with most Scots, however. Smith was humorous when referring to Rangers' bid for the title, in which they lag three points behind Celtic, saying: "I have got a reserve league to win." Nonetheless, with Paul Gascoigne gone and Laudrup in poor form, some of Rangers' lustre has disappeared.

With the transfers of Jorge Cadete and Paolo di Canio, a little glamour was also stripped from Celtic, but the hard facts do not suggest that they are in steep decline. Should Celtic win their last three games to take the title, their total will only be two points short of that achieved by Rangers in winning the championship last season.

This afternoon, Celtic are at home to Hibernian, who are last in the table and almost certain to be relegated. The Edinburgh side are also worried by injuries to two players, whom Alex McLeish, the manager, refused to name. Wim Jansen, the Celtic head coach, could afford to be sunny, naming the same squad as the one that defeated Motherwell 4-1 last weekend.

"We feel comfortable," he said, "so why should we change anything? The pressure is there for us in every game now, but the players look very confident." Craig Burley, who scored twice against Motherwell, continues to be available for Celtic, even though a persistent sciatica problem prevented him from playing for Scotland against Finland in midweek.

After the defeat by Aberdeen last Sunday, Rangers are without the suspended Lorenzo Amoruso, but Smith may restore Marco Negri to the attack when they play Heart of Midlothian at Tynecastle this afternoon.

Hearts will not field Colin Cameron, whose pelvic injury is causing concern, and Jim Jefferies, the manager, may regard the last few league games primarily as preparation for the Tennents Scottish Cup final with Rangers.

Kinkladze gives himself an hour to stage City rescue

CONSIDER this. Everton, say, or Tottenham Hotspur, Chelsea even, have two games to save themselves from the relegation into the old third division. Impossible? Well, that is the situation in which Manchester City find themselves and the Maine Road club is as big as any of them.

The inexorable slide of City down the divisions has been well documented, but still there is a failure to grasp its implications. There will be more than 30,000 at Maine Road today to see them attempt to beat Queens Park Rangers, but this is a club that has attracted 30,000-plus gates all season, despite being near the bottom of the Nationwide League first division.

This is also a club that was, without doubt, a member of the "big six" of the Seventies, but now is the time for harsh reality and the visit of Rangers represents perhaps the most important day in City's history. Lose, and they will surely be relegated into the second division for the first time. The response of Joe Royle, the manager, is interesting. Faced with a game he admits his side "must win", he has turned to Georgi Kinkladze, a hero of the supporters but an outcast under the new manager. The Georgia international has started just two matches under Royle and has not played at all for six weeks.

By David Maddock

Yet desperate times call for desperate measures. "I've told him: 'There's the stage, there's the ball, what can you do?'" Royle said. "We need to win this game and he can do it for us with one pass."

Kinkladze will leave in the summer to join Ajax, but is planning one last memory for those misty-eyed City supporters who have placed him on a pedastal with some of the great names of the past.

"I'm ready to play, I know how important this game is," he said. "I will probably only last about 60 minutes, because I'm simply not fit enough, but I will give it my best shot.

"I am still a City player and I want to help them stay up. I will never forget this place, the last three years have been fantastic and I must do something for this club."

Royle is hoping that it will be to guarantee survival. If not, the £5 million that he will receive from the sale of Kinkladze will not be enough to compensate for the embarrassment the club will suffer.

Portsmouth have agreed a new four-year contract with Alan Ball, who took charge as manager in January, replacing Terry Fenwick. Ball was expected to sign a new deal in the summer, but Martin Gregory, the chairman, has persuaded him to commit himself to the club now.

Ball, whose team could be relegated into the second division, said: "I was happy to wait until the summer to sort things out, but Martin was keen to do it now and I'm delighted."

Palace likely to lose their European chance to Villa

CRYSTAL Palace's attempt to gain a place in Europe would seem to be over after a ruling by Uefa, the governing body, giving Aston Villa the right to enter the InterToto Cup this summer.

When the FA Premier League asked in December last year for volunteers to enter the much-maligned competition — which can lead to a Uefa Cup place — only Palace expressed an interest and therefore only one place was requested, when two were on offer.

Yet when Villa, whose recent good form has seen them rise to eighth in the Premiership, were knocked out of the Uefa Cup in the quarter-finals last month, they put themselves forward for the cup.

There also have been reports that Coventry are considering a late attempt to enter the competition which would require clubs to win three two-legged pre-season matches to make it into the Uefa Cup first round.

By Our Sports Staff

But while the Premier League was in favour of allowing Palace into the competition, even if they are relegated, as they had come forward first, a spokeswoman for Uefa's InterToto committee said the club finishing highest in the Premiership would be allowed to enter.

Palace's hopes now rest on Villa qualifying for Europe automatically through their Premiership position and Coventry deciding by the official closing date for entries on June 2 that they do not want to take part.

Coventry could also still overtake Villa in the Premiership as they are five points behind them with a match in hand.

Leyton Orient, of the Nationwide League third division, have lost their appeal against a three-point deduction by the Football League for fielding ineligible players.

Nottingham Forest are ready to pay £3.5 million for Ebbe Sand, the Denmark striker, who plays for Brondby, Ekstra Bladet, a Danish newspaper, reported yesterday.

Sand is the leading scorer in Denmark's top division with 25 goals. He won his first international cap when Denmark lost 2-0 to Norway on Wednesday.

The tabloid newspaper said Dave Bassett, manager of the first division leaders and promotion favourites, had been impressed with Sand, who was ready to move overseas after the World Cup finals in France this summer.

Andrew O'Brien, Bradford's former England Under-18 player, has signed a new contract which will keep him at The Pulse Stadium until 2002.

The 18-year-old, who plays either centre-half or in midfield, is one of six home-grown youngsters from the club who have been offered long-term contracts.

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

BARNSLEY v ARSENAL

Today, 3.0 (sold out)



Mark Hodkinson

League bigwigs denied this week that they are about to borrow from boxing's code of practice. Rumours abound that the five clubs still to face rampant Arsenal have petitioned for the right to throw in the towel when the scoreline gets sufficiently embarrassing.

It took them just ten minutes to notch three against Blackburn Rovers, while their form dipped when 19 minutes had elapsed before they scored three against Wimbledon last Saturday. Arsenal have won ten of their past 11 matches, scored 12 in the past three and ... better stop there. Barnsley are loading up the towels already.

"There's no shame in being outclassed by such a good side." Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, said after his team's 5-0 thrashing at Highbury. This is some admission, for Kinnear is a proud chap, not given to eulogising the brilliance of opponents. It must be true then: Arsenal are unstoppable, not to mention unplayable.

Arsenal supporters unable to travel up the M1 today can pay £10 to watch proceedings on a giant screen at Highbury. They might witness the return of Ian Wright, though the likelihood is that he will start on the bench in deference to the in-form Nicolas Anelka.

The talk at Oakwell recently has been of conspiracy theories and dodgy referees, a useful smokescreen for a downturn in form. Danny Wilson, their manager, has tried to mould an attack around the beefy duo of Ashley Ward and Jan Aage Fjortoft.

While they have hearts to match their stature, supporting players have tended to hit the ball long and high. Barnsley's strength is their passing game and the twin battering-ram approach will almost certainly flounder against Arsenal's wall of muscle. So, the ball-playing Hendrie would seem to be a wise choice to play today.

Darren Sheridan and Jovo Bosancic are available again after suspension and the inspirational Neil Redfearn has recovered from a calf strain. Chris Morgan and Georgi Hristov are still out of action after recent red cards.

Obviously, Arsenal start as white-hot favourites, but football is nothing if not perverse. Both are desperate for the points, for entirely different reasons, but Arsenal have the luxury of extra games to collect them if they do stumble at Oakwell. For Barnsley, it is make-or-break, as simple as that.

BARNSLEY (probable, 3-5-2): D Watson — A Moses, A De Zeeuw, S Jones — N Eaden, D Sheridan, N Redfearn, J Bosancic, D Barnard — A Ward, J Hendrie

ARSENAL (probable: 4-4-2): D Seaman — L Dixon, A Adams, M Upson, N Winterburn — R Parlour, P Vieira, E Petit, M Overmars — N Anelka, D Bergkamp

Referee: M Riley

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, BBC1, 10.20pm, extended highlights.

■ PREDICTION: 3-1 win for Arsenal.

DAVID CANNON / ALLSPORT



Trophy glitter: Everton parade the FA Cup at Wembley in 1984 and, 11 days later, Liverpool lift the European Cup in Rome

FIRST 11 ELEVEN

MONOPOLY GAME

The combined exploits of Arsenal and Chelsea may cause a shortage of silver polish in London this summer. Here are some other years when a city or region dominated the honours

1. Liverpool (1984)
The quality of Mersey was staggering — Liverpool: European champions, league champions and Milk Cup winners. Everton: FA Cup winners

2. Greater Manchester (1997)
Man Utd won the Premiership, Bolton Wanderers the first division, Bury the second and Wigan Athletic the third

3. London (1991)
The Gunners were champions while Spurs lifted the FA Cup

4. Yorkshire (1925)
Huddersfield Town were in the middle of a title hat-trick and Sheffield United won the Cup

5. Manchester (1968)
United won the European Cup and City were crowned league champions (no, it's true, honest)

6. London (1967)
Ah, the Summer of Love, Sgt Pepper, Swinging London — Spurs and QPR winning both cup competitions

7. Lancashire (1973)
Eee bah gum etc. Liverpool, Burnley, Bolton and Southport ensured that all four titles went oop north

8. London (1993)
Arsenal won the first domestic cup double, but it could easily have been Sheffield claiming the same honour

9. Manchester (1956)
The Babes took the title and City brought the Cup to Maine Road

10. The Black Country (1954)
West Brom won the Cup and were runners-up to Wolves in the title race

11. London (1971)
More capital gains as Arsenal win the Double, Spurs the League Cup and Chelsea the Cup Winners' Cup

Compiled by Richard Whitehead

CHELSEA v LIVERPOOL

Today, 3.0 (sold out)



Matt Dickinson

What is normally eagerly anticipated as one of the glamour games of the season has a distinctly tarnished look about it this time around. Yet again, Liverpool approach the end of a campaign with nothing but a Uefa Cup place to show for it.

Despite feverish speculation about his position before Christmas, Roy Evans, the manager, appears increasingly likely to keep his job until next season, but surely the Anfield board will not tolerate another year drifting along in Manchester United's — and now Arsenal's — wake.

After Michael Owen's stunning emergence, there appears to be little to stop Liverpool becoming a championship force. An attack of Owen and Fowler ahead of a midfield of McManaman, Ince, Redknapp and one other should be as potent as any in the country. Once more, it comes down to the defence, which has been bolstered to some extent by Brad Friedel. Still, the club is without a centre half of genuine international calibre and the full back positions could also do with strengthening. Unless Evans acts over the summer, it will surely be the same old story next season.

Owen is suspended today after his moment of recklessness against Manchester United on Good Friday. Ince and McManaman must undergo fitness tests.

With the Cup Winners' Cup final approaching, Chelsea's players probably have less room for slack. Competition for places will heighten as the game in Stockholm approaches, with Tore Andre Flo, in particular, out to prove that he is worthy of selection. The Norwegian should start.

Gustavo Poyet should also continue his rehabilitation after six months on the sidelines because of a cruciate ligament operation. Quite outstanding against Vicenza nine days ago, his display only underlined how much Chelsea have missed his dynamism this season. Liverpool have only won once in their past ten visits to Stamford Bridge and Gianluca Vialli should field a strong enough team to maintain that run.

CHELSEA (probable, 4-4-2): D Khanno — S Clarke, M Duberry, F Leboeuf, G Le Saux — G Zola, R di Matteo, D Wise, G Poyet — T A Flo, G Vialli

LIVERPOOL (probable, 4-4-2): B Friedel — R Jones, D Matteo, P Babb, S Bjornebye — S McManaman, P Ince, J Carragher, O Leonhardsen — D Murphy, K Riedle

Referee: G Ashby.

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Home win



Richard Hobson

The meeting of these sides last October, which Aston Villa won 1-0 with a goal by Savo Milosevic, would be forgotten but for an outbreak of fisticuffs between Andy Todd and Stan Collymore. There is no chance of a repeat today as Todd is suspended, allowing Taggart a first start for Bolton Wanderers in six months.

But what of the second offender? Collymore says that he is fit enough to resume duties after a groin problem and may undergo a hernia operation at the end of the season. He is more likely to decorate the substitutes' bench, however, than the turf this afternoon. Aston Villa have won their past five games in his absence, with Yorke averaging a goal per game during the run. While hardly justifying the £15 million valuation placed upon him by John Gregory, the Villa manager, this week — Marcelo Salas, the Chile striker, cost Lazio £2 million less, after all — it helps to explain the rise and rise of Villa, which may culminate in a Uefa Cup place.

Bolton, attractive but flawed, are cartwheeling in the opposite direction and the future of Thompson, their most valuable asset, is already a matter for speculation. Villa could use a creative midfield player and have asked about him in the past.

ASTON VILLA v BOLTON WANDERERS

Today, 3.0

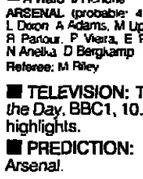
ASTON VILLA (possible; 3-5-2): M Bosnich — U Ehiogu, G Southgate, S Staunton — G Charles, I Taylor, M Draper, L Hendrie, A Wright — J Joachim, D Yorke.

BOLTON WANDERERS (possible; 3-5-2): K Branagan — G Taggart, M Fish, G Bergsson — N Cox, P Frandsen, J Sheridan, A Thompson, J Philips — N Blake, R Taylor

Referee: D Elleray.

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, extended highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Villa win.



Russell Kempson

A large majority of the foreign imports in the FA Carling Premiership enjoy a rare lifestyle. Huge wages, nice homes, a regular first-team place and the adulation of the masses.

So spare a thought for Martin Dahlin, the Blackburn Rovers striker, whose £2.5 million move from AS Roma last summer soon turned sour. It started promisingly, with games and goals to his credit, but injury then kept him out until February. On his return, ragged Rovers embarked on a sorry run of eight defeats in ten outings.

"Martin has had a disastrous season," Roy Hodgson, the Blackburn manager, said yesterday. "He has been injured for the best part of it and when he's got fit enough to come back, he has come into a team that's losing. He came here with high hopes and we had high hopes for him, too. It hasn't quite worked out yet, but I suppose it can only get better."

Hodgson's woe, as a European qualifying place appears to be increasingly unlikely, is compounded by four absentees today because of suspension — Hendry, Flitcroft, McKinlay and Wilcox. Wimbledon, not the best opponents to be facing when so vulnerable, will probably give Mark Kennedy, the former Liverpool winger, his debut.

BLACKBURN v WIMBLEDON

Today, 3.0

BLACKBURN ROVERS (possible; 4-3-3): A Flowers — J Kenna, M Broomes, S Henchoz, P Valery — S Ripley, T Sherwood, A Andersson — K Gallacher, C Sutton, M Dahlin

WIMBLEDON (probable; 4-4-2): N Sullivan — K Cunningham, D Blackwell, C Perry, B Thatcher — M Hughes, N Ardley, A Roberts, C Hughes — M Kennedy, C Leaburn.

Referee: G Poll.

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, goal highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Draw.



Nick Szczepanik

Arsenal loom large in Everton minds today. A win for the North London club against Barnsley at Oakwell would relieve some of the tension at Goodison Park, bearing in mind that Howard Kendall's men have only two more games after today and the next is at Highbury, when victory could give Arsenal the FA Carling Premiership title.

Naturally, a win today might be enough by itself to guarantee Everton another season in the top division and, despite the absence through suspension of John O'Kane — Nick Barmby returns — there will not be a better opportunity, for Wednesday are abysmal away from home. They have lost at Barnsley and Bolton Wanderers in the past two months and will be none too confident of avoiding a hat-trick of defeats by the bottom three at Crystal Palace on the final day.

Their selection problems are worse than those of Everton. Benito Carbone, Dejan Stefanovic and Earl Barrett suspended, and Petter Rudi injured. Defeat would leave them below Everton and decidedly uncomfortable. Expect any Arsenal goals to be greeted by cheers from both sets of supporters.

A new fluorescent yellow ball, designed to offer better visibility in all weather and lighting conditions, will be used for the game.

EVERTON v SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Today, 3.0

EVERTON (possible, 4-4-2): T Myhre — C Short, D Watson, C Tiler, M Ball — N Barmby, D Hutchison, G Farrelly, P Beagrie — M Madar, D Ferguson

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (possible, 4-4-2): K Pressman — P Atherton, D Walker, E Thome, A Hinchcliffe — R Humphreys, J Magilton, G Whittingham, M Pembridge — A Booth, P di Canio.

Referee: G Barber

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Home win.



Keith Pike

Two improving teams and two hungry managers should ensure a competitive edge to end-of-season affairs at Elland Road, where a win for Leeds United would go a long way to guaranteeing the Uefa Cup place that Coventry City themselves coveted for so long.

"My job is to try and get as many points as possible," Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, said, and they would not come any sweeter than these for the little man with big ambitions who captained Leeds to the 1992 championship. "We have got to finish as far up the table as we can," Strachan said. "Some of the players have built great reputations this year. They have got to maintain them."

Most interest, though, will be on George Graham's team. It was a 2-1 defeat against Coventry with which he started his reign at Leeds last season and, when Coventry subsequently completed an FA Carling Premiership double with only their second win at Elland Road in 31 attempts, Leeds were still in the wrong half of the table. They have come a long way quite quickly; only four of Graham's first selection are likely to figure today, the likes of Palmer and Rush having given way to the youthful promise of Kewell and Co. Is this another title-winning side in the making?

LEEDS UNITED v COVENTRY CITY

Today, 3.0

LEEDS UNITED (possible, 4-4-2): N Martyn — G Kelly, D Wetherall, M Hiden, I Harte — G Halle, D Hopkin, A Haaland, L Bowyer — J F Hasselbank, H Kewell.

COVENTRY CITY (probable; 4-4-2): S Ogrizovic — R Nilsson, R Shaw, G Breen, M Hall — P Telfer, T E Sottvedt, W Boland, N Whelan — D Dublin, D Huckerby.

Referee: M Reed

■ TELEVISION: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Home win.



WEST HAM UNITED v SOUTHAMPTON

Today, 3.0



Peter Robinson

Ordinarily, this would be a West Ham United piece, with analysis of their impressive home form in the league (won 12, drawn four, lost one), of their push for a place in the Uefa Cup and of the value of John Hartson, their high-scoring but suspended striker. There could be a discussion on the rights and wrongs of the club's decision to push up ticket prices, even room, perhaps, to consider the value of Bernard Lama, the goalkeeper, who wants a goodly sum to stay at Upton Park beyond the end of the season.

But it isn't, perhaps on Monday. This is a Matthew Le Tissier piece, because while EastEnders care deeply about all things claret and blue, almost everybody else is more interested in the fortunes of the Southampton enigma, maverick, maestro, playmaker, entertainer, dilettante, call him what you will. Basically, if Le Tiss is going to go to La France this summer with the England World Cup squad, he needs to string a few of his special games together.

He had one on Tuesday, when he made Russia B look like Russia F. A hat-trick, efforts that hit post and crossbar, perfect passes, inviting crosses, it was spectacular — but if he plays like an idiot this afternoon, it will also have been pointless. Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, wants to see consistent brilliance if he is to gamble on the gifted one and time is running short.

Although Le Tissier has not always been a starter for Southampton this season, it would be perverse not to pick him now, after his heroics for England B in midweek. Dryden will miss out, though, resting sore ribs, so Lundekvam should step into defence. Abou is the likely replacement for Hartson, Potts the ever-willing deputy for Unsworth, who is also suspended.

WEST HAM UNITED (possible; 3-5-2): B Lama — I Pearce, R Ferdinand, S Potts — A Impey, S Lomas, E Berkovic, F Lampard, S Lazaridis — S Abou, T Sinclair

SOUTHAMPTON (possible; 4-3-1-2): P Jones — J Dodd, K Monkou, C Lundekvam, F Benali — K Richardson, C Palmer, J Beresford — M Le Tissier — E Ostenstad, D Hirst.

Referee: D Gallagher.

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights.

■ PREDICTION: West Ham have got to be favourites, but ...



Brian Glanville

Will Jürgen Klinsmann start for Tottenham Hotspur? Will Darren Anderton? These seem the salient questions as Tottenham confront again the spectre of relegation. Injuries have been a thorn all season, but mismanagement has surely contributed to their decline.

When Alan Sugar, the chairman, swallowed humble pie over his reaction to Klinsmann's departure (what could he have done about it?), there was joy. Perhaps Sugar should now publicly confess that it was a mistake to bring Klinsmann back and to allow a contractual clause more controversial than the one that permitted him to go — the clause that states he cannot be dropped.

Christian Gross, the Swiss coach, did leave the German out from half-time at Barnsley and should do so again, preferring the double spearhead of Chris Armstrong and Les Ferdinand. Can he, will he?

Gross's own appointment seems increasingly to be a false step in the dark, a misguided attempt to follow (continental) fashion. A manifest square peg in a round hole, given to endless team talks, Gross can hardly be blamed for failing to adjust to an unfamiliar and deeply difficult situation.

But spare Sugar from blame for selling Teddy Sheringham to Manchester United for £3 million-plus. Sheringham's recent club form suggests that Tottenham got much the better of the bargain. Do they really want him back at White Hart Lane?

Anderton must start. His form at Loftus Road on Tuesday for England B against Russia B was highly encouraging, even if he said afterwards that he was glad to get off the pitch unscathed after 80 minutes. Putting him in midfield would enable Colin Calderwood to drop back to replace the erratic Ramon Vega, the Switzerland defender, whose chief value seems to be to use his head at set-pieces.

Newcastle United showed at Old Trafford, where they resourcefully drew, that they are in the ascendant. Shearer can win any game. Robert Lee seems sure to be out, injured, but Steve Howey could be ready to return to the defence.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v NEWCASTLE UNITED

Today, 3.0

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (possible; 4-3-3): I Walker — S Carr, C Calderwood, S Campbell, A Nielsen — R Fox, N Berti, D Anderton — L Ferdinand, C Armstrong, D Ginola.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (possible, 4-4-2): S Given — N Dabizas, P Albert, S Pearce, A Pistone — D Hamilton, D Batty, G Speed, W Barton — A Andersson, A Shearer.

Referee: J Winter.

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, extended highlights.

■ PREDICTION: Narrow Tottenham victory.



Russell Kempson

Martin O'Neill, the Leicester City manager, is well known for his occasional excursion to Planet Zog, such is his ability to twist the English language towards its outer extremities. However, when he says that his side *has* to win its four remaining matches to stand a chance of qualifying for Europe next season, it is no off-the-cuff Zogian remark.

Leicester took part in the Uefa Cup earlier this season, thoroughly enjoyed it, despite their first-round defeat against Atlético Madrid, and want more. If they are to repeat the experience, though, a 12-point haul will more than likely be needed.

"This is the time to stop play-acting," O'Neill said yesterday. "We have to win because a draw would be of no use. A draw at Derby would normally be a good result, but we'll have to go for more than that.

"If we can find one last push to win our last games, we could well sneak that coveted European place. But if we don't come away with three points, it would really stack the odds against us."

The main problem for Leicester, in their Midlands derby at Derby, is that County have the same aim. They lie three points ahead of Leicester, but have fallen from grace of late, with only one victory from their past six matches. They also earned the dubious distinction last weekend of becoming the first side to lose an away game in the FA Carling Premiership against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park this season.

Jim Smith, the Derby manager, views tomorrow afternoon in much the same vein as O'Neill. "I would have thought this game is very much make or break for us," he said. "We're three points off the qualifying places so we can't afford to lose if we are thinking in terms of a Uefa place.

"We've let ourselves down a bit recently. Six games ago, we had the chance to make this a very, very good season, but if we don't get these next four results right, it will only be an ordinary one. It's very important that we put in a strong performance against Leicester because anyone who doesn't do that will suffer. They're a tough side."

DERBY COUNTY v LEICESTER CITY

Tomorrow, 4.0

DERBY COUNTY (possible; 3-5-2): M Poom — G Rowett, I Stimac, C Dailly — R Delap, L Carsley, R van der Laan, L Bohinen, C Powell — D Burton, P Wanchope.

LEICESTER CITY (probable, 3-5-2): K Keller — P Kaamark, M Elliott, S Walsh — R Savage, N Lennon, G Parker, M Izzet, S Guppy — I Marshall, E Heskey.

Referee: G Willard

■ TELEVISION: Tomorrow: Live, Sky Sports 1 (3pm).

■ PREDICTION: Leicester edge closer to Europe.

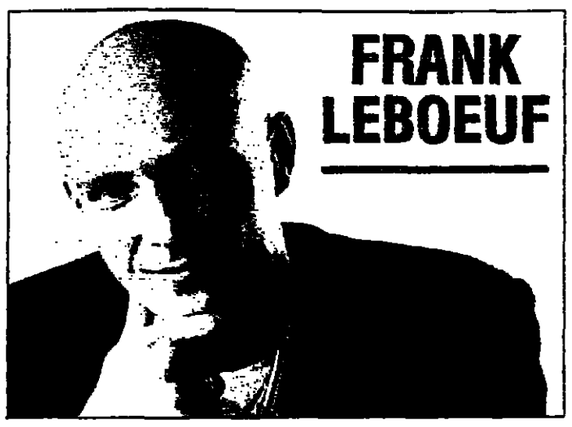
ON MONDAY

Brilliant insights or hopeless guesses? Check our writers' predictions against their weekend match reports

هكذا من الاصل

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

Don't knock healing hands, because they have worked for me



FRANK LEBOEUF

In a strange week, when faith healing appears to have become more of a talking point than football, I will own up right away. I have seen a faith healer and, yes, I believe it works. Given the ridicule heaped on Glenn Hoddle this week, maybe I should have remained in the closet, but I believe that those who have mocked the England coach are doing so out of ignorance and should try to look more deeply before they rush into easy judgment. Sure, there will be plenty of people who do not trust the work of healers and they are entitled to their opinion — but that does not mean those who use them deserve to be derided.

The healer that I visited when I was a young player with Laval had been a farmer. His wife had been ill and they found that laying his hands on her helped ease the problem. I have to say I was not full of expectation of a miracle recovery, but I had been told that I needed an operation on my knee and wanted to try anything that might avoid painful surgery that would keep me out for months.

It was curiosity as much as anything and I was not easily won over. When he put his hands on my knee, there was none of the warm glow I had expected and, when I went to leave, the familiar pain was all too apparent. What a load of rubbish, I thought, and went home feeling slightly daft.

Scoff if you will, but the next morning I woke up to find I could leap out of bed with no discomfort at all. The pain had disappeared completely and I was ready to put my boots on. The doctors had been adamant that I would need surgery. Several years later, there has not been a scalpel anywhere near my knee. Explain that. Some people seem cynical about healers because of the religious connotations, but the two do not necessarily go hand in hand. I believe that some people have a special power to trigger things in your body and help recovery. Whether that comes from God, I am not sure, but if that is what others think, then their faith should be respected.

Some people believe in the Immaculate Conception, others do not. Who are we to say which is right or wrong? The trouble is that when people cannot understand something, they try to laugh at it to cover their own ignorance.

The issue goes much farther, because there are even doctors with fantastic records of success who have had to overcome scepticism just because of their unusual methods. There is an osteopath in France, Philippe Boixel, who does a lot of work with the national team, Juventus and now with Arsenal, whom he visits regularly.

The first time I saw him in Laval, I had torn my quadriceps, the muscles on the front of your thighs. Regular doctors, physios and masseurs had tried to sort out the problem, without success. Philippe was the answer. He is a trained doctor, but, like a faith healer, he ran his hands over me to try to find the cause of my pain. Eventually, he concluded there was a problem in one of my teeth.

I was incredulous. Still, I went to the dentist who, sure enough, said there was indeed a tooth that needed treatment. Once he had done it, the quads soon recovered.

Another time, I had a problem with my ankle, which Philippe said had been caused by an inflammation behind my eyes. He believed that it had transmitted down my back through connected nerves and eventually to my ankle. Sounds daft? Well, the eyes were treated and my ankle recovered.

Philippe's technique is unusual, but his client list speaks for itself and other famous sportsmen are benefiting. Remember José Maria Olazábal, who could not even walk to the shops, never mind around a golf course, because of pain in his feet. Dozens of doctors tried in vain to work out what was wrong with his feet until one in Germany — who has also worked with the likes of Jürgen Klinsmann — said it was related to his back. Look at Olazábal now.

People should not rush to judge. I am sure there will be some England players who do not believe Eileen Drewery can heal them — fair enough, they should not be forced to see her — but if others believe it is helping them, what harm can it do? The last thing Hoddle deserves is mockery.

■ Desailly's our man

The season has not even finished and the transfer speculation is already going crazy. Inevitably, Chelsea are in the thick of it, with talk of signing Pierluigi Casiraghi, from Lazio, Dino Baggio, from Parma and Marcel Desailly, my colleague for France who plays for AC Milan. No doubt there will be another dozen names before the summer is over.

I do believe that we need one more high-class player in each department of defence, midfield and attack if we are to progress from a good team on the fringes of the championship to one capable of winning it.

Desailly, with whom I have played eight or nine times in the national team, would be an excellent addition. He has not had the best of times with AC Milan this season, but nor have Maldini, Boban or Savicevic. Maybe after winning every trophy possible, things have gone a little stale. A fresh challenge could do them good and Marcel would find that at Stamford Bridge. Brian Laudrup is one definite signing and I am sure Gianluca Vialli will not stop there. More exciting times lie ahead.

■ Knees-up over Poyet

Whoever Luca signs, we feel already as if we are benefiting from one new arrival. Gustavo Poyet's performance in the Cup Winners' Cup semi-final second-leg victory over Vicenza was quite outstanding, especially as he had not played since October because of a terrible knee ligament injury.

That comeback should have reminded people how crucial he can be to Chelsea. Alex Ferguson has said that Manchester United would not have lost several games this season if Roy Keane had been there and I am certain the same can be said about Gustavo.

He was a Uruguayan arriving in a strange country, yet he scored five goals in his first 14 games, a fantastic record for a midfield player, and fitted in as though he had played at Chelsea all his life. It is great to have him back.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

(Last week's position in brackets)	PLAYED	POINTS	GOAL DIFF	HOME W	HOME D	HOME L	HOME F	HOME A	AWAY W	AWAY D	AWAY L	AWAY F	AWAY A	LAST 10 MATCHES W-D-L	CURRENT STREAK
1. ARSENAL (2)	33	69	+33	13	2	2	38	10	7	7	2	23	18	9-1-0	W7
2. MANCHESTER UTD (1)	35	68	+39	12	4	2	39	9	8	4	5	26	17	5-3-2	D2
3. LIVERPOOL (3)	34	59	+21	11	2	4	33	16	5	9	3	25	21	3-5-2	D1
4. CHELSEA (4)	34	57	+26	11	2	3	31	12	7	1	10	33	26	4-0-6	W2
5. LEEDS UTD (5)	35	57	+14	9	3	5	27	17	8	3	7	26	22	6-1-3	W1
6. WEST HAM UTD (8)	34	52	+5	12	4	1	34	11	3	3	11	13	31	4-5-1	W1
7. BLACKBURN ROVERS (6)	34	51	+5	10	3	4	39	26	4	6	7	16	24	2-0-8	L4
8. ASTON VILLA (9)	35	51	0	8	3	6	24	21	7	3	8	20	23	7-0-3	W5
9. DERBY COUNTY (7)	34	49	+5	11	3	3	32	14	3	4	10	17	30	3-1-6	L1
10. LEICESTER CITY (10)	34	46	+6	5	9	3	20	15	6	4	7	23	22	3-4-3	D2
11. COVENTRY CITY (11)	34	46	0	7	8	2	24	17	4	5	8	16	23	5-4-1	D2
12. SOUTHAMPTON (12)	35	44	-5	10	1	7	28	21	3	4	10	17	29	4-1-5	L1
13. WIMBLEDON (13)	34	41	-8	5	6	7	16	19	5	5	6	15	20	3-2-5	L1
14. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (14)	35	41	-14	9	5	4	29	23	2	3	12	19	39	3-2-5	L1
15. NEWCASTLE UTD (15)	34	40	-8	7	5	6	19	19	3	5	8	13	21	1-5-4	D1
16. EVERTON (16)	35	39	-9	7	4	6	23	23	2	8	8	16	25	2-5-3	D2
17. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (17)	35	37	-18	6	7	4	20	21	3	3	12	15	32	2-5-3	D2
18. BARNSLEY (19)	35	35	-40	7	4	6	25	31	3	1	14	12	46	4-1-5	D1
19. BOLTON WANDERERS (18)	35	34	-23	6	8	4	20	20	1	5	11	13	36	3-2-5	L2
20. CRYSTAL PALACE (20)	34	29	-29	1	4	11	11	33	6	4	8	20	27	2-0-8	W1

ATTACK

	Goals scored	Avge
1. Chelsea	64	1.88
2. Manchester Utd	65	1.86
3. Arsenal	61	1.85
4. Liverpool	58	1.71
5. Blackburn	55	1.62
6. Leeds	53	1.51
7. Derby	49	1.44
8. West Ham	47	1.38
9. Sheffield Wed	48	1.37
10. Southampton	45	1.29
11. Leicester	43	1.26
12. Aston Villa	44	1.26
13. Coventry	40	1.18
14. Everton	39	1.11
15. Barnsley	37	1.06
16. Tottenham	35	1.00
17. Bolton	33	0.94
18. Newcastle	32	0.94
19. Crystal Palace	31	0.91
= Wimbledon	31	0.91

DEFENCE

	Goals conceded	Avge
1. Manchester Utd	26	0.74
2. Arsenal	28	0.85
3. Leicester	37	1.09
= Liverpool	37	1.09
5. Leeds	39	1.11
6. Chelsea	38	1.12
7. Wimbledon	39	1.15
8. Coventry	40	1.18
= Newcastle	40	1.18
10. West Ham	42	1.24
11. Aston Villa	44	1.26
12. Derby	44	1.29
13. Everton	48	1.37
14. Southampton	50	1.43
15. Blackburn	50	1.47
16. Tottenham	53	1.51
17. Bolton	56	1.60
18. Crystal Palace	60	1.76
19. Sheffield Wed	62	1.77
20. Barnsley	77	2.20

SCORING TRENDS

Goals per half	1st	2nd
Arsenal	34	27
Aston Villa	16	28
Barnsley	22	15
Blackburn	32	23
Bolton	13	20
Chelsea	27	37
Coventry	18	22
Crystal Palace	14	17
Derby	27	22
Everton	19	20
Leeds Utd	27	26
Leicester	16	27
Liverpool	19	39
Manchester Utd	25	40
Newcastle	15	17
Sheffield Wed	20	28
Southampton	18	27
Tottenham	15	20
West Ham	19	28
Wimbledon	12	19

CLEAN SHEETS

	Clean sheet	Failed to score
Arsenal	16	7
Aston Villa	8	11
Barnsley	6	10
Blackburn	11	9
Bolton	10	12
Chelsea	13	8
Coventry	11	12
Crystal Palace	5	13
Derby	11	14
Everton	10	12
Leeds Utd	11	12
Leicester	12	8
Liverpool	11	4
Manchester Utd	17	7
Newcastle	9	11
Sheffield Wed	8	7
Southampton	8	11
Tottenham	9	14
West Ham	8	9
Wimbledon	11	14

SCORERS

Premiership only	Goals
Sutton (Blackburn)	17
Dublin (Coventry)	16
Owen (Liverpool)	16
Bergkamp (Arsenal)	15
Gallacher (Blackburn)	15
Hartson (West Ham)	15
Hasselbaink (Leeds)	14
Cole (Manchester Utd)	13
Baiano (Derby)	12
Wanchope (Derby)	12
Di Canio (Sheffield Wed)	11
Huckerby (Coventry)	11
Blake (Bolton)	10
Ferguson (Everton)	10
Flo (Chelsea)	10
McManaman (Liverpool)	10
Redfearn (Barnsley)	10
Vialli (Chelsea)	10
Wallace (Leeds)	10
Wright (Arsenal)	10
Yorke (Aston Villa)	10

HOME

	P	Pts	Avge
1. Arsenal	17	41	2.41
2. West Ham	17	40	2.35
3. Man Utd	18	40	2.22
4. Chelsea	16	35	2.19
5. Derby	17	36	2.12
6. Liverpool	17	35	2.06
7. Blackburn	17	33	1.94
8. Leicester	17	31	1.82
9. Sheff Wed	18	32	1.78
10. Leeds	17	30	1.76
11. Southampton	18	31	1.72
12. Coventry	17	29	1.71
13. Aston Villa	17	27	1.59
14. Barnsley	17	25	1.47
=. Everton	17	25	1.47
=. Tottenham	17	25	1.47
17. Bolton	18	26	1.44
=. Newcastle	18	26	1.44
19. Wimbledon	18	21	1.17
20. C Palace	16	7	0.44

CAUTIONS

Cards issued	Yellow	Red
1. Everton	73	5
2. Leeds Utd	71	3
3. Derby	69	2
4. Bolton	63	5
5. Coventry	62	5
6. Arsenal*	64	3
7. C Palace	64	2
8. Chelsea	62	3
9. Barnsley	59	4
10. Sheffield Wed	59	3
11. Manchester Utd*	59	1
12. Blackburn	54	4
= West Ham	54	4
14. Newcastle	56	2
15. Southampton	54	3
16. Tottenham	55	2
17. Liverpool	48	2
18. Wimbledon	45	1
19. Leicester	41	2
20. Aston Villa	41	1

* Caution downgraded/erased

AWAY RECORDS

	P	Pts	Avge
1. Arsenal	16	28	1.75
2. Man Utd	17	28	1.65
3. Leeds	18	27	1.50
4. Liverpool	17	24	1.41
5. Aston Villa	18	24	1.33
6. Leicester	17	22	1.29
7. Wimbledon	16	20	1.25
8. Chelsea	18	22	1.22
=. C Palace	18	22	1.22
10. Blackburn	17	18	1.06
11. Coventry	17	17	1.00
12. Newcastle	16	14	0.87
13. Everton	18	14	0.78
14. Derby	17	13	0.76
=. Southampton	17	13	0.76
16. West Ham	17	12	0.71
17. Tottenham	18	12	0.67
18. Sheffield Wed	17	10	0.59
19. Barnsley	18	10	0.56
20. Bolton	17	8	0.47

REFEREES

Premiership games only	Cards issued P	Yellow	Red
1. G Willard	19	84	7
2. M Reed	17	73	2
3. G Barber	20	81	5
4. G Poll	19	72	8
5. U Rennie	19	76	4
6. J Winter	17	65	2
7. D Elleray	17	60	4
8. S Dunn	15	51	2
9. P Durkin	18	60	3
10. A Wilkie	21	68	2
11. M Riley	18	56	3
12. N Barry	18	55	1
13. P Alcock	16	54	1
14. M Bodenham	19	57	1
15. P Jones	19	54	2
16. G Ashby	17	47	2
17. D Gallagher	17	46	2
18. S Lodge	19	49	2
19. K Burge	18	44	4

POINTS PENDING

	Number of fixtures (h-a)	Projected points based on form H	A	Tot
Arsenal	2-3	4+	5	9+
Aston Villa	2-1	3	1	4
Barnsley	2-1	3	1	4
Blackburn	2-2	4	2	6
Bolton	1-2	1	1	2
Chelsea	3-1	7	1	8
Coventry	2-2	3	2	5
C Palace	3-1	1	1	2
Derby	2-2	4	2	6
Everton	2-1	3	1	4
Leeds Utd	2-1	4	1	5
Leicester	2-2	4	2	6
Liverpool	2-2	4	3	7
Man Utd	1-2	1+	3	4+
Newcastle	1-3	1	3	4
Sheff Wed	1-2	1+	1	2+
Southamptn	1-2	1+	1+	2+
Tottenham	2-1	3	1	4
West Ham	2-2	4+	1	5+
Wimbledon	1-3	1	5	6

WEEKEND MATCHES

TODAY

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket*

FA Carling Premiership
(1) Aston Villa v Bolton
(2) Barnsley v Arsenal
(3) Blackburn v Wimbledon
(4) Chelsea v Liverpool
(5) Everton v Sheffield Wednesday
(6) Leeds v Coventry
(7) Tottenham v Newcastle
(8) West Ham v Southampton

Nationwide League
First division
(9) Bury v Ipswich
(10) Charlton v Tranmere
(11) * Crewe v Bradford
(12) Manchester City v QPR
(13) Norwich v Swindon
(14) * Oxford Utd v Birmingham
(15) Portsmouth v Huddersfield
(16) Sheffield Utd v West Bromwich
(17) Sunderland v Stoke
(18) Wolverhampton v Stockport

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts F	44	27	9	8	80	41	90
Sunderland	43	24	12	7	81	47	84
Charlton	44	25	9	10	78	49	84
* Middlesbro	43	25	9	9	71	39	84
Ipswich	43	20	14	9	71	41	74
Sheff Utd	42	19	16	7	63	44	73
Birmingham	44	18	16	10	58	35	70
Wolverhmptn	43	19	10	15	50	46	64
Stockport	44	17	8	19	66	66	59
Oxford Utd	44	16	10	18	59	58	58
Bradford	44	14	15	15	45	51	57
West Brom	44	15	12	17	45	53	57
Huddersfld	44	14	11	19	50	65	53
Crewe	43	16	5	22	49	61	53
Tranmere	43	13	13	17	49	51	52
Swindon	44	14	10	20	41	66	52
Norwich	44	12	13	19	46	59	49
Bury	44	10	19	15	41	57	49
QPR	44	10	18	16	49	60	48
* Port Vale	44	12	10	22	52	65	46
Stoke	44	11	13	20	42	66	46
Man City	44	11	11	22	48	53	44
Portsmth	44	11	10	23	45	62	43
Reading	44	11	9	24	39	76	42

* Does not include last night's match

Second division
(19) Blackpool v Bristol Rovers
(20) Bournemouth v Burnley
(21) * Brentford v Luton
(22) Bristol City v Walsall
(23) Carlisle v York
(24) Northampton v Fulham
(25) Oldham v Southend
(26) Plymouth v Gillingham
(27) Watford v Grimsby
(28) Wrexham v Preston
(29) Wycombe v Chesterfield

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bristol City	44	24	10	10	86	38	82
Watford	43	22	15	6	63	39	81
Grimsby	44	19	14	11	55	35	71
Fulham	44	20	10	14	69	40	70
Bristol R	44	19	10	15	58	62	67
Northmptn	44	17	16	11	51	37	67
Wrexham	44	17	15	12	52	50	66
Gillingham	44	18	12	14	51	47	66
Chestrfld	44	16	15	13	44	42	63
* Wigan	44	17	9	18	54	66	60
Bournemth	43	16	12	15	52	48	60
Blackpool	44	16	10	18	57	66	58
Wycombe	44	13	17	14	49	52	56
Preston	44	14	13	17	54	56	55
York	44	13	16	15	50	57	55
Oldham	43	13	15	15	55	51	54
Walsall	44	14	12	18	42	49	54
* Millwall	43	14	12	18	52	52	54
Luton	44	13	14	17	55	60	53
Plymouth	44	12	13	19	54	67	49
Brentford	44	11	16	17	47	67	49
Burnley	43	12	12	19	49	59	48
Carlisle	44	12	8	24	54	68	44
Southend	44	10	13	21	46	74	43

* Does not include last night's match

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Atherstone v Forest Green; Bath v Kings Lynn; Gloucester v Cambridge City; Halesowen v Crawley; Merthyr v Bromsgrove; Nuneaton v Ashford Salisbury v Rothwell; Sittingbourne v Dorchester St Leonards v Grasley; Tamworth v Burton Albion; Worcester City v Hastings Southern division: Chelmsford v Havant; Erith and Belvedere v Cinderford; Fleet T v Trowbridge; Margate v Clevedon; Newport A F C v Fareham; Newport I-O-W v Dartford; Tonbridge Angels v Bashley; Weston-super-Mare v Fisher London; Weymouth v Cirencester Town; Witney v Waterlooville; Yate v Baldock Midland division: Bedworth v Stafford; Blakenall v Grantham; Hinckley Utd v Ilkeston; Paget R v Evesham; R C Warwick v Corby; Raunds T v Sutton Coldfield Town; Shepshed D v Brackley Town; Stourbridge v Solihull Boro; V S Rugby v Bilston; Wisbech Town v Redditch

LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v Welshpool (2.30), Barry v Flint Town (2.30), Caersws v Conwy (2.30), Carmarthen Town v Bangor City (2.30), Cemaes Bay v Rhayader Town (2.30), Cwmbran v Caernarfon (2.0), Ebbw Vale v T N S (2.0), Inter Cable-Tel v Connah's Quay (2.30), Porthmadog v Newtown (2.30), Rhyl v Haverfordwest (2.0).

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ards v Bellymena, Glentoran v Crusaders, Linfield v Glenavon, Omagh v Coleraine; Portadown v Cliftonville. First division: Bangor v Newry; Distillery v Ballyclare; Larne v Dungannon Swifts, Limavady Utd v Carrick

Third division
(30) Barnet v Mansfield
(31) Brighton v Hull
(32) Cambridge Utd v Notts County
(33) Colchester v Leyton Orient
(34) Darlington v Lincoln
(35) Hartlepool v Cardiff
(36) Macclesfield v Chester
(37) Rotherham v Rochdale
(38) Scarborough v Shrewsbury
(39) Scunthorpe v Exeter
(-) Swansea v Doncaster
(-) Torquay v Peterborough

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts Co	44	26	11	5	75	39	95
Macclsfld	44	21	13	10	57	41	76
Torquay	44	20	11	13	64	56	71
Lincoln	44	19	14	11	56	48	71
Colchester	44	20	10	14	70	59	70
Scarboro	44	19	13	12	66	57	70
Barnet	44	19	13	12	60	48	70
Rotherham	44	18	18	10	63	54	66
Peterboro	44	18	12	14	62	48	66
Scunthrpe	44	17	12	15	52	51	63
L Orient	44	16	11	15	59	45	62
Exeter	44	15	15	14	66	58	60
Shrewsbury	44	16	12	16	61	60	60
Chester	44	17	9	18	57	57	60
Mansfield	44	14	17	13	62	55	59
Cambs Utd	44	14	17	13	61	54	59
Hartlpool	44	11	22	11	59	53	55
Rochdale	44	16	6	22	52	52	54
Darlington	44	14	10	20	54	70	52
Swansea	44	13	10	21	49	61	49
Cardiff	44	9	22	13	48	50	49
Hull	44	10	7	27	53	81	37
Brighton	44	6	16	22	35	62	34
Doncaster	44	4	7	33	30	112	19

Vauxhall Conference
(-) Dover v Morecambe
(-) Farnborough v Hednesford
(-) Gateshead v Hayes
(-) Halifax v Cheltenham
(-) Hereford v Rushden and Diamonds
(-) Kettering v Kidderminster
(-) Leek v Welling
(-) Northwich v Woking
(-) Slough v Stalybridge
(-) Southport v Yeovil
(-) Telford v Stevenage

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division
(40) Celtic v Hibernian
(41) Dundee Utd v St Johnstone
(42) Hearts v Rangers
(43) Kilmarnock v Aberdeen
(44) Motherwell v Dunfermline

First division
(45) Falkirk v Dundee
(46) Greenock Morton v Ayr
(47) Partick v Hamilton
(48) Raith v Stirling
(49) St Mirren v Airdrie

Second division
(-) Brechin v Forfar
(-) Clyde v Clydebank
(-) East Fife v Inverness CT
(-) Livingston v Stenhousemuir
(-) Queen Of South v Stranraer

Third division
(-) Albion v Queen's Park
(-) Alloa v East Stirling
(-) Arbroath v Montrose
(-) Dumbarton v Berwick
(-) Ross County v Cowdenbeath

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Accrington Stanley v Altrincham, Altrincham v Emley; Bamber Bridge v Bishop Auckland; Barrow v Hyde; Colwyn Bay v Blyth Spartans; Frickley v Leigh RMI; Lancaster v Boston; Spennymoor v Marine; Winsford v Gainsborough. First division: Bradford Pk Ave v Belper Town, Great Harwood v Stocksbridge PS, Harrogate Town v Congleton; Lincoln United v Gretna, Netherfield v Matlock Town, Whitby v Eastwood Town, Whitley Bay v Ashton United, Workington v Droylesden, Worksop v Burton Presidents Cup: Final: first leg: Guiseley v Runcorn.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury v St Albans, Basingstoke v Sutton United, Boreham Wood v Hendon, Bromley v Yeading, Carshalton v Oxford City, Dagenham and Red v Dulwich; Harrow v Enfield; Hitchin v Chesham, Kingstonian v Heybridge, Walton and Hersham v Gravesend and Northfleet. First division: Berkhamsted v Hampton, Grays v Uxbridge, Leatherhead v Bognor Regis, Maidenhead v Barton Rovers, Molesey v Leyton Pennant; Romford v Chertsey, Staines v Croydon, Thame Utd v Aldershot Town, Wembley v Billericay; Wokingham v Abingdon Town, Worthing v Whyteleafe. Second division: Barnstead v Braintree, Barking v Leighton Town; Bedford T v Tilbury, Bracknell v Tooting and Mitcham, Canvey Island v Edgware; Chalfont St Peter v Egham, Cheshunt v Witham, Met Police v Hungerford, Wealdstone v Horsham; Windsor and Eton v Marlow, Wivenhoe v Northwood. Third division: Aveley v East Thurrock; Camberley Town v Corinthian-Casuals, Croydon v Epsom and Ewell, Dorking v Lewes, H Hempstead v Flackwell Heath Hornchurch v Harlow; Tring v Southall, Ware v Hertford, Wingate & Finchley v Kingsbury

TOMORROW

FA Carling Premiership
Derby v Leicester (4.0)

Nationwide League
First division
Notts Forest v Reading (1.0)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Folkestone v Trowbridge, Margate v Cinderford Midland division: Brackley Town v Redditch

UNIBOND LEAGUE: First division: Belper Town v Gretna

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Cork v Bohemians (2.0), St Patrick's Ath v Dundalk (3.15), UCD v Sligo (3.15)

COVERAGE

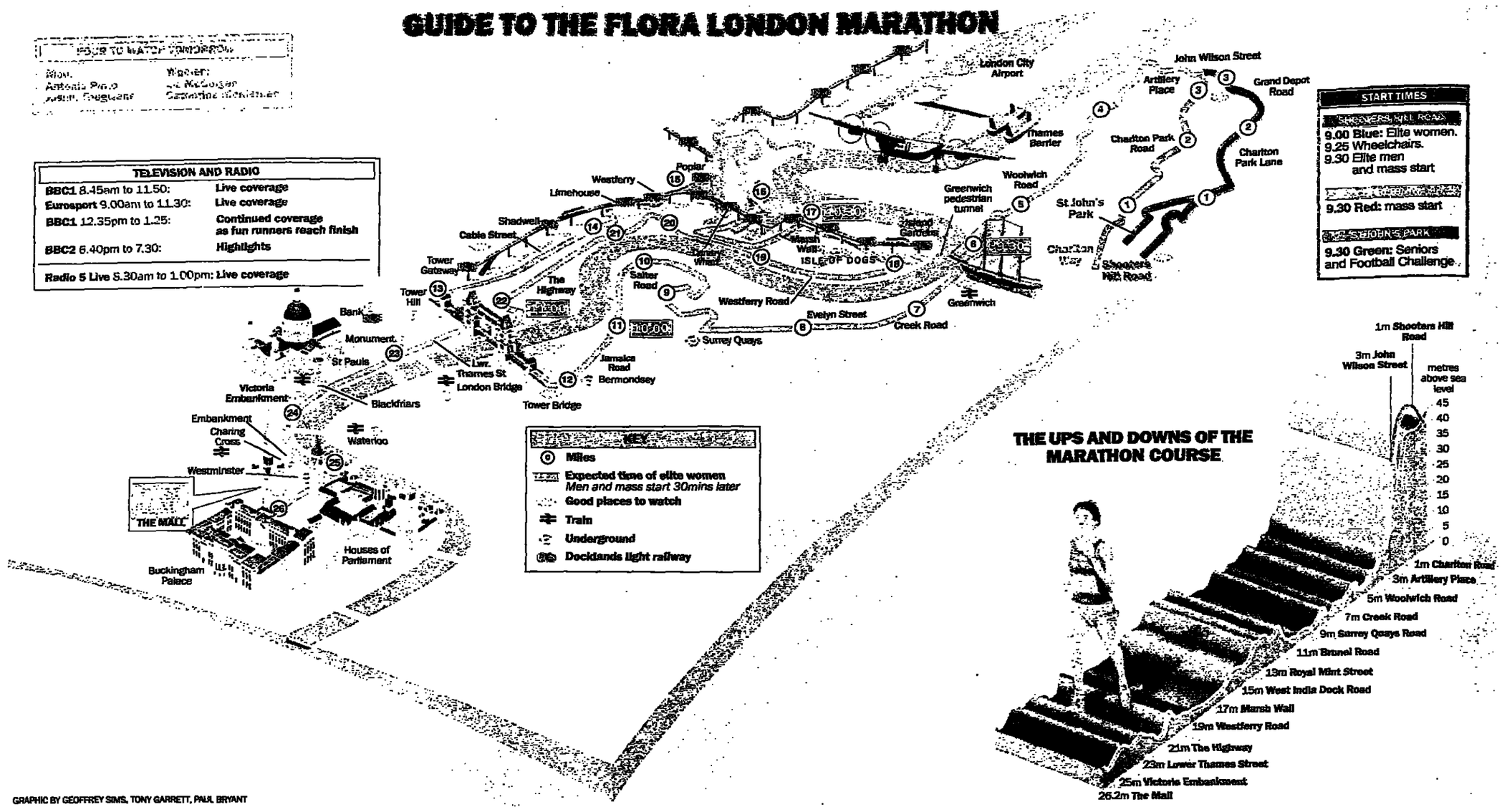
TELEVISION: Today: BBC1: *Football Focus*, from 12.20pm; *Match of the Day* (FA Carling Premiership action, with extended highlights of Arsenal v Barnsley, Tottenham v Newcastle and Aston Villa v Bolton), from 10.25pm (repeated tomorrow at 6.50am). Sky Sports 1: Spanish league (live) from 7pm. Tomorrow: Channel 4: *Football Italia* (live coverage of Juventus v Internazionale), from 2.45pm. Sky Sports 1: Live coverage of Derby v Leicester in *Live Super Sunday*, from 3pm. Sky Sports 2: Nationwide League First division, Nottingham Forest v Reading (live), from 12pm.

RADIO: Today: BBC Radio 5 Live: Live coverage of a Premiership match in *Sport on 5*, from 1pm. Tomorrow: BBC Radio 5 Live: Live coverage of Derby v Leicester in *Sunday Sport*, from 1pm.



Statistics compiled by Julian Desborough

GUIDE TO THE FLORA LONDON MARATHON



GRAPHIC BY GEOFFREY SIMS, TONY GARRETT, PAUL BRYANT

British quartet exude confidence while Bedford envisages substantial increase in competitors

McColgan happy for McKiernan to bask in limelight

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Flora London Marathon tomorrow is expected to be the biggest and best in the 18-year history of the race, but still nowhere near its limits of size. David Bedford, the head of marketing for the event, disclosed yesterday that he expects the millennium marathon to take 10,000 more entries than the record 41,500 accepted this year from 94,000 applications.

Changes to the two "pinch points" on the course, where the human traffic congestion is at its worst, should enable London to move clear of the opposition in the numbers game. The London, New York and Honolulu marathons are at the head of the field, each lining up slightly in excess of 30,000 starters.

An entry of 51,500 would take the starting figure to 37,000, judging by the proven methods of calculating numbers who drop out before race day. Like London, New York attracts a significant elite field, but Honolulu does not. The sharp end is, Bedford believes, essential to London's well-being as the world's most impressive marathon.

"We do not see ourselves as a marathon that wants to chase the title of being the biggest," Bedford said. "With the course as it is, we believe we should not take any more." However, obstacles that force the course to narrow at the Cutty Sark and Cable Street should be overcome after next year's race, Bedford said.

For those who suffer along the route tomorrow, heed the words of Antonio Pinto, the defending champion. "People think the marathon is difficult, but I do not think so," he said. "What is really difficult is training for a marathon."

If you have prepared well, you should be alright. Four athletes confident that they have are the main British contenders: Liz McColgan, Marian Sutton, Paul Evans and Jon Brown. They gave a press conference together yesterday and sounded no less assured than Catherina McKiernan and Pinto, the race favourites.

How did McColgan feel that McKiernan was favourite? "Great," she said. McColgan won in 1996, but was second last year to Joyce Chepchumba, from Kenya, who returns. "I am very pleased with the way training has gone," McColgan said.

Sutton, winner of the Chicago Marathon for the past two years, is optimistic of a personal best, which stands at 2hr 29min 3sec. "I have a lot to prove after last year," Sutton said, referring to her twentieth place in London. Never having beaten 2½ hours, Sutton folded after running to the clock. "I had that on my mind too much and I let a gap open. This year I am confident."

If there is a feeling that Evans, at 37, is past his best, he may recall that, at the same age, Carlos Lopes became the Olympic champion. At 38, Lopes set a world record. Evans has just released a video. "It has really inspired me," he said, with a salesman's grin. And how is it selling? "Next question." What a win tomorrow would do for business.

In his build-up, Evans has beaten Josiah Thugwane, the Olympic marathon champion, who is Pinto's main challenger here, over a half-marathon. Abel Anton, the world champion, Steve Moneghetti, the Commonwealth champion, and Elijah Lagat, from Kenya, are the other main men's contenders.

Tim Hutchings, the assistant race director, said yesterday that, after consulting the leading women athletes, London had chosen not to use male pacemakers for the women's race. "The idea has been put off until next year," Hutchings said. "The athletes did not want such a radical adjustment to their plans in the last few days."

By next year, though, it may be too late. The pacemaking that assisted Tegla Loroupe to a world record in Rotterdam last Sunday was performed by men in a mixed race. They even celebrated with her as she crossed the line. Whatever next?

"We had considered cutting the floor out of a double-decker bus with McKiernan running inside for protection against the wind," Hutchings said, responding cynically to Rotterdam's methods. London sends its women's elite off 30 minutes before the men.

Grete Waitz, who set four marathon world records, said yesterday that Loroupe "had no need to think — she just put a brick between her ears and ran". Waitz called for the International Amateur Athletic Federation to "put its foot down" and insist that mixed fields should not qualify for world bests.

This weekend finds one Briton, Nick Bourne, attempting to become the first to run the length of Africa and another Briton, Ray Mouncey, flying to California to run through Death Valley. Beware you 16,000 first-time marathon runners: once bitten by the bug, you never know where it might lead.



Josiah Thugwane, the Olympic champion, receives a warm welcome as he arrives to deliver a masterclass to London schoolchildren preparing for *The Times* Mini Marathon tomorrow. The South African answered a barrage of questions from the youngsters, part of a 3,000-strong entry for the 2.8-mile run from Southwark Bridge to The Mall that will precede the adult race. They found out that he eats bread and cheese before a race, played football before taking up athletics and that he has only learnt to read and write in the last year. The event, now in its thirteenth year, has proved a stimulus for British athletics. Keith Cullen, who won the event twice in the 1980s, went on to represent Great Britain at the Atlanta Olympic Games and says that it was "the whole reason I got into running in the first place".

Brown takes self-belief to new heights

David Powell on the assured Briton out to profit from altitude training

Charlie Spedding, the last Briton to win an Olympic marathon medal, and Eamonn Martin, the last to triumph in the London Marathon, five years ago, agree on at least one point: that Jon Brown is going to be the nation's next great marathon runner. They believe it and, more to the point, Brown believes it.

It may or may not happen tomorrow. Brown is quoted by William Hill at 40-1 to win. As an each-way flutter, he considers it "a fantastic bet". Not that he is ruling out winning, even though the field includes the Olympic champion, the world champion and the Commonwealth champion.

"As it is only my second marathon, I think it is asking a lot to win, but I am looking to run around 2hr 8min, whether I win or lose," Brown said. "I have not been in this kind of shape before." Only four Britons have broken 2hr 9min and only one, Steve Jones, a former world record-holder, has run inside 2hr 8min.

In saying that he is in the best shape of his life, Brown is suggesting that he is fitter than when he won the European cross-country title two winters ago and better prepared than last summer, when he ran the second-fastest 10,000 metres by a Briton, only narrowly missing Martin's British record.

Certainly, he is stronger than when he made his marathon debut in Chicago in October. Brown's build-up was interrupted by injury, but still he managed a decent 2hr 10min 13sec. "I was not in anything like the shape I am in now," Brown said. "I came out of the race with a reasonable time and I learnt a lot."

One thing that Brown has not learnt is diplomacy. A citizen of the world, he speaks only one language: brashness. Born in Bridgend, raised in Sheffield and university educated in Iowa, he has lived in Duisburg and is now resident in Maple Ridge, 30 miles outside Vancouver. For the London Marathon, he has been preparing at altitude, high above Boulder, Colorado, at 8,500ft.

While Antonio Pinto, the defending champion, from Portugal, is the 6-4 favourite, having run a half-marathon world record last month, Brown is hardly trembling in his trainers. "I do not see anything he has done that I am not in the shape to do," he said, with typical impudence. Nothing frightens Brown, not even training in the University of British Colombia research forest, where he runs the risk of encountering mountain lions and black bears.

Brown is what journalists describe as quotable. Two years ago, he said that Britain's male track distance runners were "pitiful". Last year, he asserted that he was "not really impressed" with any present-day marathon runners and, when asked at the Chicago Marathon for his view of the $1 million bonus for a United States record, he scoffed at it, describing American marathon runners as "old dogs".

Brown goes into the London Marathon with a glowing reference from Spedding, the 1984 champion and Olympic bronze medal-winner. "I am excited about him doing the marathon, not only because he has run exceptionally well at 10,000 metres, but because he prepares well for races," Spedding said.

"Most of the distance runners in Britain try to be jack of all trades but end up masters of none. I think he could be great. He appears to have everything you need."

No British man has come close to winning London since Martin's triumph in 1993, but he does not expect that to last indefinitely. "Jon could be in a position to challenge next year," Martin said. "I do not think he will be good enough this year. It is too early, and the guys here are seasoned campaigners.

"I would not write him off to run 2:07 here, but, personally, I think he will need another marathon. But he has got all the credentials: economic style, fast times over 5,000 and 10,000 metres and the right mental approach."

Like Catherina McKiernan, the women's favourite, Brown sacrificed taking part in the world cross-country championships last month to ensure a meticulous build-up for tomorrow.

He has not raced for three months, missing the one competition that he had hoped for because of a four-day stomach ailment. He made up for it with a ten-mile "hard tempo" run at altitude two weeks ago, recording 47min 30sec. "That was as good as a race, definitely worth sub-46 minutes at sea-level, and on quite a tough course," he said. "That tells me all I need to know."

Paul Evans, the last British man on the London dais, third in 1996, is 37 now and recognises that, at 27, "Jon is the future of British marathon running". The future is bright, the future is Brown.

Spectators' guide to best vantage points

BY JOHN GOODBODY

IF YOU are not actually running in the Flora London Marathon, then you should try to watch it from the streets rather than be content to sit at home and see it unfold on television.

This event is not just an athletic contest, it is a carnival and you cannot fully experience the unique atmosphere unless you are there. Every year, an estimated 600,000 spectators turn out for a free view. It is as good as getting a front-row seat at the FA Cup Final or Wimbledon.

The marathon becomes a huge party, with people leaning out of windows or sitting in their gardens to watch the runners go by. There are more than 70 pubs along the 26 miles 385 yards and many enjoy their best takings of the year. The customers give special support to runners from the local neighbourhood, some of whom have even been known, against all scientific advice, to down a glass of beer to see them through the rest of the race.

Many spectators travel round the capital, either by public transport or on foot, to watch their favourite runners at different vantage points. If you have a car handy, don't bother to use it. You will find the roads impassable.

There is always a huge crowd at the three starts on Blackheath Common and many supporters then cross Greenwich Park to Romney Road to see the competitors as they circle round the Cutty Sark after the six-mile mark.

The course then runs west through the Surrey Quays and Deptford to reach Tower Bridge, which is just before the halfway mark. If you want a clear view, then this part of the course, along Evelyn Street, Salter Road and Jamaica Road, is relatively empty. Spectators are always two or three deep over Tower Bridge because they know that they can also see the runners when they cross underneath one of the approaches to the Bridge at 23 miles.

Canary Wharf, which is at 15 miles, is an excellent spot because you can also see the competitors at 20 miles. Some spectators will reach the Isle of Dogs by foot tunnel under the Thames after watching at Greenwich. The Isle of Dogs is also the least crowded area and the one where the runners themselves most appreciate support.

There are always plenty of spectators lining the pavements for the last two miles of the race, along the Embankment, Birdcage Walk and the Mall. If you want a clearer view, then try for a place along Lower Thames Street, between the Tower and the Embankment. Often the elite competitors will be attempting to make a decisive break there, while many of the fun-runners, longing to reach the finish line, will welcome encouragment.

ONLY IN THE TIMES NEXT WEEK

Full coverage of the London Marathon and a complete listing of all the runners and their official finishing times

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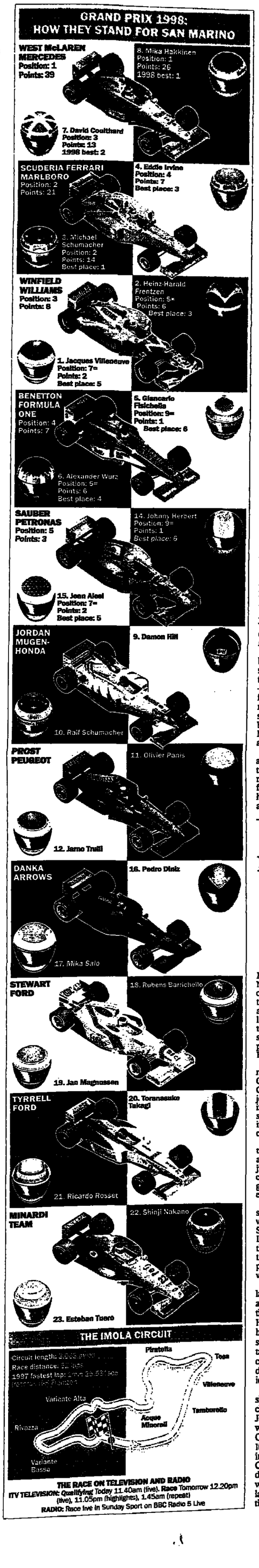
START TIMES

9.00 Blue: Elite women.
9.25 Wheelchairs.
9.30 Elite men and mass start

9.30 Red: mass start

9.30 Green: Seniors and Football Challenge

1m Shooters Hill Road
3m John Wilson Street
1m Charlton Road
3m Artillery Place
5m Woolwich Road
7m Creek Road
9m Surrey Quays Road
11m Brunel Road
Royal Mint Street
India Dock Road



MOTOR RACING: EARLY-SEASON LETHARGY LEFT BEHIND AS GRAND PRIX CIRCUS ARRIVES IN EUROPE

Race teams move into higher gear

FROM KEVIN EASON IN IMOLA



Good vibrations: Coulthard makes sure that the all-conquering McLaren team stays on song at Imola. Photograph: Mike Cooper/Allsport

FROM the back of a gaggle of onlookers clad in red came a middle-aged man with a programme and a large marker pen that he stretched out towards the figures hunched over the disembowelled car.

A kindly Ferrari minder took the offering and began to seek the autograph of the driver the fan had apparently spotted lurking in the garage. Eventually, though, it dawned that neither Michael Schumacher nor Eddie Irvine was there. The fan wasn't looking for a driver at all; he wanted Ross Brawn, the Ferrari technical director, a backroom expert not used to being sought out for his signature.

That is a measure of the enthusiasm for motor racing at Imola, little more than an hour from the Maranello, home of Ferrari. Members of every team are stars here, even the mechanics who find themselves pressed into embarrassing photographic poses with fans. Nobody minds, though. The San Marino Grand Prix tomorrow kick-starts the Formula One season into vivid, tumultuous life.

Listless teams pining for home over the past month were yesterday working with furious intensity. It was as though Brazil and Argentina were little more than dress rehearsals. The atmosphere was electrifying for the two practice sessions, which left McLaren on centre stage but with the rest of the cast hoping to steal a few scenes, if not the show.

Jacques Villeneuve started his recuperation by hurling his unwilling Williams around this long and gloriously fast circuit. He described the car as "the same animal" that he could barely control in Argentina and yesterday it was like an enthusiastic puppy on a polished wooden floor, scrabbling for grip.

Nevertheless, he seemed to be a man revived by the sunshine, mindful, perhaps, that one big performance here — with Williams aiming for four San Marino victories in a row — will resurrect his status, which is in danger of being dimmed by the McLarens of David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen.

They were top-of-the-bill again, like a pair of troupers going through their reliable routine. Hakkinen in front of Coulthard and nearly half-a-second ahead of Michael Schumacher.

The Ferraris arrived here with wings — side-mounted X-wings that do little for their looks but apparently a lot to regain some of the downforce lost by new regulations that demand narrower cars with grooved tyres and consequently less grip. Eddie Irvine tested out the accessory and Jean Todt, the team manager, confirmed that both cars are likely to use them in qualifying today.

Practice sessions are usually regarded as a two-hour shakedown, meaningless in terms of lap times. That might have been the case in the first three grands prix, when the cars were new and the teams warming to their task, but here the designers have made changes that they hope will propel them to the front of the grid and drivers know that every rapid lap can impress a potential employer. Along with the racing, the rumour-mills spring to life here and the paddock was awash yesterday with speculation about driver changes. Inevitably, Schumacher was at the epicentre, rumoured to be ready to use a get-out clause from the remaining year of his Ferrari contract to jump to McLaren.

Villeneuve was tipped for Ferrari, while Alexander Wurz, after only six grands prix, is also being talked about here by Italians deeply impressed by his daring overtaking.

For some, San Marino represents a significant wake-up call. Damon Hill, of Great Britain, is under pressure from Jordan to improve his performance, as is his teammate, Ralf Schumacher.

Gary Anderson, the Jordan technical director, admitted that he and Eddie Jordan, the team owner, had been "a bit disturbed" by their performances. Ralf Schumacher is yet to finish a race, while Hill has limped home unimpressively.

Practice failed to provide Hill with much comfort. He fell to ninth while Ralf Schumacher was fifth. The former world champion, however, remained upbeat. "Up until now, there was not much consistency, but now I feel I can really push," he said.

Johnny Herbert has also been struggling to get his season under way. He was testing his Sauber last week in France, where it poured. Ever the optimist, he reported: "We did work out a quite useable wet weather set-up."

Yesterday was hot and Herbert was about 2.5sec off the pace. The forecast for Sunday is for a warm, bright day ... sometimes, life just isn't fair.

IMOLA DETAILS

PRACTICE TIMES: 1, M Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren) 1min 27.617sec; 2, D Coulthard (GB, McLaren) 1:27.940; 3, M Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1:28.088; 4, J Villeneuve (Can, Williams) 1:28.644; 5, R Schumacher (Ger, Jordan) 1:28.891; 6, G Fisichella (It, Benetton) 1:28.983; 7, E Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1:29.028; 8, O Panis (Fr, Prost-Peugeot) 1:29.175; 9, D Hill (GB, Jordan) 1:29.246; 10, H-H Frentzen (Ger, Williams) 1:29.470; 11, J Alesi (Fr, Sauber) 1:29.516; 12, M Salo (Fin, Arrows) 1:29.828; 13, A Wurz (Austria, Benetton) 1:29.864; 14, T Tagaki (Japan, Tyrrell) 1:30.190; 15, J Herbert (GB, Sauber) 1:30.223; 16, P P Diniz (Br, Arrows) 1:30.795; 17, J Trulli (It, Prost-Peugeot) 1:30.804; 18, R Barrichello (Br, Stewart-Ford) 1:30.849; 19, E Tuero (Arg, Minardi-Ford) 1:31.954; 20, S Nakano (Japan, Minardi-Ford) 1:32.052; 21, J Magnussen (Den, Stewart-Ford) 1:32.198; 22, R Rosset (Br, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:32.554.

LEADING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS: Drivers: 1, Hakkinen 26pts; 2, Schumacher 14; 3, Coulthard 13; 4, Irvine 7; equal 5, Frentzen, Wurz 6; equal 7, Villeneuve, Alesi 2; equal 9, Herbert, Fisichella 1. Constructors: 1, McLaren 39pts; 2, Ferrari 20; 3, Williams 8; 4, Benetton 8; 5, Sauber 3.

GRANDS PRIX TO COME: Tomorrow: San Marino (Imola) May 10: Spanish (Barcelona). May 24: Monaco (Monte Carlo). June 7: Canadian (Montreal). July 12: British (Silverstone). July 26: Austrian (Zeltweg). August 2: German (Hockenheim). August 16: Hungarian (Budapest). August 30: Belgian (Spa-Francorchamps). September 13: Italian (Monza). September 27: Luxembourg (Nurburgring). October 11: Portuguese (Estoril). November 1: Japanese GP (Suzuka).

SQUASH

Nicol wakes up just in time to save face

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

PETER NICOL, the world No 1, was relieved to survive one of the pitfalls of competitive supremacy when he awoke just in time from Scotland's undemanding progress towards promotion from the second division of the European team championships in Helsinki yesterday.

Paul Gregory, 28, the former British champion from Croydon, who now leads the Greece squad, suddenly injected his most obstinate mood into the third game of the first-string rubber against Scotland in pool C of the men's championship.

Nicol was cruising along two games ahead when he abruptly lost two games for just six points and had to concentrate very seriously to gain a 9-4 fifth game to avoid embarrassment.

Gregory, the world No 41, said: "I decided at 0-2 that I was not going to give this Scottish kid a three-game win. I turned him round so quick I thought I might even win in the end. But I have to admit he played the fifth game very well."

Gregory has played for England, but switched to the Greek antecedence of his father when the likes of Simon Parke, Del Harris and Peter Marshall began to crowd him on the selection lists. He considered taking up his mother's Scottish connections, but saw Nicol's developing pretentions to national primacy.

In the women's championship, Sue Wright, the British champion, stepped in after Jane Martin was injured in a warm-up session and beat Claire Waddell, of Scotland, 10-8, in England's last qualifying match of pool A. Wright, Cassandra Jackman and Linda Charman form a three-woman campaign for England's 21st successive women's title in Europe.

BOWLS: YOUTH HOLDS SWAY AS McALLISTER AVENGES DEFEAT OF LAST YEAR

Scottish champion surprises Shaw

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

YOUTH triumphed over experience in the semi-finals of the women's world indoor singles championship at Llanelli yesterday, when Caroline McAllister, 30 last Saturday, and Carol Ashby, nine months older, defeated opponents who were, without being too specific, old enough to be their mothers.

McAllister, the Scottish champion, from Lochwinnoch, gained revenge for her defeat in the final last year when she cruised to a surprisingly easy 7-2, 7-1, 5-7, 7-2 victory over Norma Shaw, the title-holder, from County Durham. Ashby, the English champion, from Eastbourne, lost narrowly to Shaw in the play-offs for the British championship last month, but has struck form this week. She disappointed spectators in the Selwyn Samuel centre yesterday when she overwhelmed Maureen Tanner, from the Rhondda, 7-1, 7-4, 7-4.

McAllister dropped only three shots in the first two sets, but conceded the third when Shaw played a conversion shot right out of the top drawer. Undaunted, the Scot tightened her game and bounced back.

"I opened up an early lead in last year's final, but Norma, who is a class performer, put me under pressure and I lost my grip," McAllister said. "This time I was determined to keep my concentration until the end."

Shaw, whose bowls needed much more green than those of her opponent, struggled to find the right line and consequently lost her length. She admitted to committing the cardinal sin of leaving too many woods short of the jack.

BADMINTON

Britons complete unlikely double

FROM RICHARD EATON IN SOFIA

GREAT Britain gained two unexpected European championship finalists yesterday when Kelly Morgan, of Wales, booked a meeting with Camilla Martin, the defending champion, in the women's singles and Simon Archer and Chris Hunt, of England, raised hopes of regaining the men's doubles title by beating Michael Sogaard and John Holst-Christensen, the No 1 seeds. Both finals take place today.

Morgan's 12-9, 11-8 win against Mette Pedersen made her the first British singles finalist for eight years and stopped Denmark's bid to win all six gold medals for the second European championships in succession. Chris Reece, the Wales coach, said: "You can have tactics, but it's what's happening on court that matters. She saw it needed an injection of pace in the first game and it worked."

Archer and Hunt were the only unbeaten partnership in the team event. Helped of Park Joo-bong, the former Olympic champion, who has added variety to their mid-court game, they beat Sogaard and Holst-Christensen 15-8, 15-9. The English pair meet Peter Axelsson and Par-Gunnar Jonsson, of Sweden, in the final. Archer could have reached the mixed doubles final, but he and Joanne Goode let slip a lead of a game and 7-2 against Michael Keck and Erica van den Heuiel.

Peter Rasmussen, the world champion, from Denmark, has withdrawn from the championships with an Achilles strain.

FOR THE RECORD

BADMINTON

SOFIA: European championships: Men: Quarter-finals: P Gade (Den) bt D Eriksson (Swe) 15-7, 15-4; P Rasmussen (Den) bt M Constable (GB) 3-15, 15-9, 15-1, K Jonassen (Den) bt T Johansson (Swe) 5-15, 15-11, 15-5, P-E Hoyer (Den) bt O Pongratz (Ger) 15-6, 15-9. Semi-finals: Gade bt Rasmussen wo; Jonassen bt Hoyer 15-8, 15-6. Women: Quarter-finals: C Martin (Den) bt M Borg (Swe) 11-2, 11-0, M Sorensen (Den) bt J Meulendijks (Holl) 11-4, 11-3, K Morgan (GB) bt K Krasowska (Pol) 11-5, 11-4; M Pedersen (Den) bt B Beenhakker (Holl) 11-4, 11-2. Semi-finals: Martin bt Sorensen 11-7, 12-11, Morgan bt Pedersen 12-8, 11-8.

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Tampa Bay 12 Texas 5; Cleveland 5 Chicago White Sox 4. NATIONAL LEAGUE: Pittsburgh 7 San Francisco 0; Milwaukee 2 Los Angeles 1; San Diego 4 Chicago Cubs 1; Colorado 4 Florida 3; Montreal 5 St Louis 2; Philadelphia 6 Cincinnati 3; Atlanta 3 Arizona 1 Postponed: NY Mets v Houston.

BASKETBALL

BARCELONA: European Championship final four: Third-place play-off: Benetton Treviso (It) 96 Partizan Belgrade 89 (Yug) Final: Kinder Bologna (It) 58 AEK Athens (Gr) 44. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Play-offs: first leg: Eastern Conference: Indiana 106 Cleveland 77, Charlotte 97 Atlanta 87. Western Conference: Houston 103 Utah 90; San Antonio 102 Phoenix 86.

BOWLS

LLANELLI: Women's World Indoor Singles Championship: Semi-Finals: C McAllister (Scot) bt N Shaw (Eng) 7-2, 7-1, 5-7, 7-2. C Ashby (Eng) bt M Tanner (Wales) 7-1, 7-4, 7-4.

FOOTBALL

Thursday's late results

VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Cheltenham 2 Stalybridge 0; Farnborough 3 Southport 2; Hayes 0 Dover 0; Slough 1 Kettering 1

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Emley 3 Spennymoor 0; Whitefd 3 Lancaster 0. First division: Matlock Town 1 Gretna 1.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Baldock 1 Erith and Belvedere 2; Yate 3 Margate 0.

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Watford 1 Oxford Utd 0.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Notts Forest 1 Derby 0.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Boreham Wood 2 Heybridge Swifts 3, Bromley 1 Chesham 2; Purfleet 1 Basingstoke 2. First division: Abingdon Town 3 Worthing 0; Berkhamsted 0 Uxbridge 2; Leyton Pennant 1 Grays 2; Whyteleafe 1 Maidenhead 2. Third division: Hornchurch 1 East Thurrock 2; Kingsbury 2 Camberley 3.

OPTIMUM INTERIORS CAPITAL LEAGUE: Gillingham 1 Brentford 2.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham 5 Crockenhill 1, Cray 1 Thamesmead 1.

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Wembley Ladies 0 Millwall Lionesses 9.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Tiverton 2 Taunton 1

DUTCH LEAGUE: Ajax 6 Willem II Tilburg 1

☐ All other matches postponed

GOLF

BARCELONA: Spanish Open: Leading scores after two rounds (GB and Ire unless stated): 130: R Allenby (Aus) 66, 64. G Chalmers (Aus) 64, 66. 133: J Townsend (US) 64, 69; P Price 67, 66, D Howell 65, 68, E Romero (Arg) 68, 67, G Brand Jnr 67, 66. 134: M James 68, 66, M A Jimenez (Sp) 67, 67; J Van de Velde (Fr) 65, 69, K Tomori (Japan) 67, 67; J M Canles (Sp) 64, 70, P Lawrie 68, 66. 135: T Bjorn (Den) 68, 67, D Hospital (Sp) 67, 68; S Luna (Sp) 68, 67. 136: C Whitelaw (SA) 68, 68, M Roe 69, 67; S Grappesonni (It) 70, 66; I Garrido (Sp) 70, 66, M Mackenzie 69, 67, S Garcia (Sp) 66, 70; M Tunnicliff 67, 69; M Gronberg (Swe) 69, 67; P Hedblom (Swe) 69, 67. 137: P Sjoland (Swe) 68, 71, B Dredge 69, 68, J Remsey (Fr) 68, 69, J M Olazabal (Sp) 66, 71, D Carter 69, 68, A Cabrera (Arg) 67, 70; M Mouland 72, 65; M Ferry (Fr) 69, 68; I Giner (Sp) 67, 70. 138: I Garbutt 67, 71, D Smyth 69, 69; A Larrazabal (Sp) 65, 72, J Lomas 68, 70; S Allan (Aus) 66, 72. D Chopra (Swe) 66, 72; J Cocaras (Arg) 70, 68. 139: I Woosnam 69, 70; F Roca (Sp) 71, 68; S Leaney (Aus) 70, 69, T Level (Fr) 66, 71, C Hanline (US) 68, 71; R Gonzalez (Sp) 71, 68; F Cea (Sp) 70, 69, J Sandelin (Swe) 68, 71, P Broadhurst 72, 67; D Edlund (Swe) 69, 70; R Chapman 68, 71; A Coltart 69, 70; R Karlsson (Swe) 72, 67, M A Martin (Sp) 69, 70; S Torrance 70, 69; J Haeggman (Swe) 69, 70; I Pyman 71, 68, E Darcy 68, 71, J Payne 70, 69.

PERTH, Australia: Amateur challenge (final day of three): Europe 18 Asia-Pacific 14 (Europe names first: D de Vooght (Bel) lost to H Kahlon (India) 2-3, J Rose (Eng) bt Su Chin Jung (China) 5-4; O David (Fr) lost to G Ogilvy (Aus) 4-5; G Rankin (Scot) lost to Kim Jong-Myung (S Kor), Asia Pacific 2 up; P Hansson (Swe) bt G Rosales (Phil) 3-2; C Aronsen (Nor) lost to H Hoshino (Japan), AP 2 up, J Donaldson (Wales) lost to B Rumford (Aus) 3-4; A Pons (Sp) bt Lin Wan Ko (China) 2-1, R Pacitto (It) bt R La'o (Phil) 7-6, T Dlar (Ger) bt R Sayer (NZ), 1 up; K Kearney (Ire) bt N Ramasamy (Malaysia) 4-3; G Wolstenholme (Eng) bt R Best (NZ) 4-3).

HOCKEY

MILTON KEYNES: Men's Quadrangular tournament: England 6 Scotland 1; England Lions 3 Wales 2.

MASSACHUSETTS: Women's four nations tournament: United States 3 Canada 1, Canada 0 England 3, United States 2 India 0. Standings: 1, England 6pts; 2, United States 6, 3, Canada 0

ICE HOCKEY

LJUBLJANA, Slovenia: World Championships: Pool B: Great Britain 10 Holland 3.

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Play-offs, first round: Montreal 3 Pittsburgh 2 OT; St Louis 8 Los Angeles 3.

RACKETS

CLIFTON COLLEGE, Bristol: World Doubles Championship: First leg: S Hazell and N Smith bt W Boone and P Brake 4-3

RUGBY UNION

Super-12

Canterbury	40	Otago	24

Canterbury Crusaders: Tries: A Mehrtens, S Robertson, M Mayerhoffer, T Matson Con: Mehrtens Pens: Mehrtens 3 Dropped goals: Mehrtens 3. Otago Highlanders: Tries: P Alaimi, T Randell, I Maka. Cons: Brown 3. Pen: T Brown.

(in Christchurch)

Wellington	32	ACT Brumbies	29

Wellington Hurricanes: Tries: M Leslie, C Cullen. Cons: J Preston 2. Pens: J Preston 6. ACT Brumbies: Tries: O Finegan 2, J Roff 2. Cons: D Knox 3. Pen: D Knox.

(in Canberra)

RUGBY LEAGUE

AUCKLAND: Test match: New Zealand 22 Australia 16

SHOOTING

BLOEMFONTEIN: South Africa Rifle Championships: Colonel Bodley Trophy (900m): 1, D Coleman (GB) 100 6 Tie 29.1, 2, J Moolman (SA) 100.6 Tie 24; 3, G Lauterbach (SA) 100.4. Other British result: 4, J Warburton 100 4 State President's Prize, first stage: 1, T Whitaker (US) 105 19; 2, A van der Weshuizen (SA) 105 14; 3, A van Graan (SA) 105 14. British results: 8, Messer 104 19; 8, D Luckman 104.17; 15, W Richards 104 14. Aggregate: 1, Messer 203.23, 2, Moolman 203.21, 3, W Botha (SA) 203.20. Grand Aggregate (one more match to go): 1, S Regan (NZ) 854.53; 2, S Collings (GB) 853 65. 3, G Potgieter (SA) 853 46

SNOOKER

SHEFFIELD: Embassy world championship: First round: J White (Eng) bt S Hendry (Scot) 10-4. Latest positions: Second round: K Doherty (Ire) leads S Lee (Eng) 6-2, J Higgins (Scot) level with A Hamilton (Eng) 8-8; M Williams (Wales) leads S Davis (Eng) 11-5. J Parrott (Eng) leads A Drago (Malta) 5-3.

SQUASH

HELSINKI: European Teams Championship: Third round qualifying results: Men: Pool A: England 4 Sweden 0; France 4 Denmark 0; England 4 Denmark 0; France 2 Norway 2. Pool B: Wales 3 Germany 1, Finland 4 Switzerland 0; Wales 4 Switzerland 0, Finland 4 Germany 0. Pool C: Scotland 4 Norway 0; Greece 4 Norway 0; Scotland 4 Greece 0. Pool D: Ireland 4 Portugal 0, Austria 4 Portugal 0; Belgium 4 Czech Republic 0; Ireland 2 Austria 2. Pool E: Spain 4 Czech Republic 0, Spain 4 Belgium 0. Pool F: Holland 4 Liechtenstein 0; Italy 3 Israel 1, Holland 4 Israel 0, Italy 4 Liechtenstein 0. Holland 2 Italy 2; Israel 4 Liechtenstein 0. Women: Pool A: England 3 France 0; Scotland 3 Sweden 0; England 3 Sweden 0, Scotland 3 France 0; England 3 Scotland 0; France 3 Sweden 0. Pool B: Germany 3 Finland 0, Holland 3 Belgium 0, Belgium 2 Finland 1, Germany 2 Holland 1 Pool C: Italy 2 Austria 1, Denmark 2 Austria 1, Denmark 2 Italy 1 Pool D: Ireland 3 Wales 0; Spain 3 Wales 0; Ireland 3 Norway 0; Spain 3 Ireland 0; Norway 2 Wales 1

TABLE TENNIS

EINDHOVEN: European Championships: Men: Category two: England 4 Moldova 0; England 4 Portugal 1, Ireland 4 Azerbaijan 1, Wales 1 Spain 4; Scotland 1 Croatia 4. Women: England 4 Croatia 3, England 4 Ukraine 1, Hungary 4 England 1; Scotland 0 Slovenia 4, Ireland 0 Poland 4.

TENNIS

ORLANDO: US Clay court championships: Second round: A Calatrava (Sp) bt H Gurny (Arg) 4-6, 7-6, ret, M Carlsson (Sr) bt G Stafford (SA) 6-4, 3-6, 6-2; A Pavel (Rom) bt J Gimelstob (US) 7-6, 6-2; M Chang (US) bt F Squillari (Arg) 7-6, 6-4.

MONACO: Monte Carlo Open: Quarter-finals: C Moya (Sp) bt A Corretja (Sp) 6-3, 6-2; R Krajicek (Holl) bt P Korda (Cz) 4-6, 7-6, 6-1; C Pioline (Fr) bt F Santoro (Fr) 1-6, 6-2, 6-4; A Berasategui (Sp) bt B Becker (Ger) 6-7, 7-5, 6-1

BUDAPEST OPEN: Second round: R Kutsk (Hun) bt C Costes (Rom) 6-3, 6-2; LI Fang (China) bt L Golarza (It) 6-2, 6-4; S Tsabal (Fr) bt E Bes (Sp) 7-6, 7-6; S Ferina (It) bt C Torrens-Valero (Sp) 6-2, 6-2; V R Pascual (Sp) bt F Lubiani (It) 6-0, 4-6, 7-6

RUGBY UNION

Saracens to keep sights low on visit to Leicester

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WHATEVER vicissitudes Leicester have been through this season, their Welford Road ground remains a daunting examination for any visitor. Only Newcastle have won there in nine Allied Dunbar Premiership matches and Saracens must follow suit today to sustain a credible challenge for the double.

Until 1995, Saracens had never recorded so much as a single win over the Midlands club. That has been rectified with successive triumphs at Southgate, Enfield and, in the Tetley's Bitter Cup in January, Watford, but the margins have been wafer-thin and never more so than this season. A dropped goal by Joel Stransky gave Leicester a 22-21 Premiership win at Vicarage Road in December and, a month later, a late Michael Lynagh penalty gave Saracens their 14-13 cup win.

All, then, to play for in the decider, but so much more riding on the result. Saracens trail Newcastle at the head of the first division only on points difference of 32, though they do not expect to make that up at Leicester. "A win by any margin is our aim and that will be hard enough," Mark Evans, the Saracens director of rugby, said.

"Leicester haven't had a great season by their standards, but they don't lie down on their own pitch. We have two very hard away games in five days, as we visit Harlequins next week. If we win them both, then we can set about the points-difference problem."

By that stage, they can expect the difference to be wider if Newcastle, as expected, recover their poise and defeat Bristol, the bottom club, at Kingston Park tomorrow. Leicester also have aspirations of their own, talking of a top-four finish with all the fervour of a club that has to believe European rugby remains on the doorstep next season, whatever statements have been made to the contrary.

Realistically, their optimum target is third place, above Bath, but to achieve that they need greater consistency than they have shown at any stage this season, either under the coaching of Bob Dwyer or the new panel of John Wells and Joel Stransky. Criticism of the Leicester board's decision to dispense with Dwyer is likely to persist until the club's annual meeting in June, but the players can only put their heads down and carry on.

Dean Richards, the team manager, is husbanding his resources by resting the likes of Austin Healey, Richard Cockerill and Martin Corry, though Darren Garforth will create a club appearance record with his 115th league game. Saracens, like Newcastle, are assessing their casualty list, which includes not only Richard Hill and Francois Pienaar but Kyran Bracken and Richard Wallace.

If the ongoing negotiations between the Rugby Football Union and the leading clubs do restore English interests in Europe, such a target is not out of reach of Richmond and Gloucester, who meet at the Athletic Ground. If Richmond's ground-sharing schemes, which could involve a removal to Reading, bear fruit, it may be Gloucester's last visit. They have restored Phil Vickery to the front row, though Brian Johnson, their wing, will be lost to the Army, who play the Royal Navy at Twickenham in the first match of the Willis Corroon inter-services championship.

Scott Benton, who can expect to tour the southern hemisphere with England this summer, is rested, along with Dave Sims and Nathan Carter. Long-serving Laurie Beck plays scrum half against Agustin Pichot, of Richmond, the Argentinian reputed to be the target of several clubs, among them Leicester. Dan McFarland returns to the Richmond front row, in direct opposition to Vickery.

There will be a piquant meeting at Sunbury between London Irish and Harlequins, given the former affiliations of Richard Best, now coaching consultant to the Exiles. Under Best's guidance, the Irish have won four matches out of six, but remain joint-favourites, with Bristol, for relegation — if that, rather than play-offs, is to be the fate of the bottom two clubs.

Though he will not play against Newcastle — Gareth Baber partners Josh Lewsey at half back — Robert Jones has agreed to stay with Bristol. The former Wales scrum half has agreed a new two-year contract, as have two other internationals, Paul Burke and Kevin Maggs. Better times may yet be around the corner.

David Hands on the mellowing of a precious rugby talent

DOUG MARKE



Back's short fuse has been discarded in favour of a settled life that has been reflected in an outstanding season

Back to his best for club and country

It would be wrong to describe Neil Back as having once been one of the "angry young men" of his generation. Faintly irritated, perhaps, but there is little extravagance about Back and now there is even less. Gone is the floppy lock of blond hair that was his trademark: instead, a close crop that reflects the new, more certain Back.

Every now and then, Back breaks out: that six-month suspension for pushing Steve Lander, the referee, to the ground at the end of the 1996 cup final, the purchase of a BMW two-seater when his salary soared from that of a pensions supervisor to that of a high-profile professional sportsman. But, in general, you might regard him as safe.

Utterly safe when it comes to his rugby, except the adjective does not begin to do justice to his many talents. There is a certainty about his play — whether in his primary role as open-side flanker, in his handling of the ball, in his kicking — that suggests rugby and Back were made for each other. The game is an expression of a flamboyance in his personality to which so much has been subordinated since his first England schoolboy appearances in 1985.

Now, though, Back, at 29,

He now appreciates that there is more to life than sport

is more at ease with himself. He has passed through the hurt-and-rejected phase that reached its apogee when Geoff Cooke managed England and the sizeist debate over back-row forwards was at its height. The laws, in any case, have changed and place far more emphasis on skill.

A run of seven consecutive appearances in England colours over the past five months, bringing his tally of caps to 12, reflects a player who has found his place in the world, who appreciates that there is more to life than sport. "I used to be very intense," Back said. "I focused on rugby too heavily, but when I was banned I had to think about other things."

That period was one for growing up. "What started as a negative became a positive for me," Back said. He became engaged to Alison — they are to marry in July, the Saturday after England's southern-hemisphere tour ends — set about a house purchase in the Balsall Common area of Birmingham, not so far from his own birthplace in Coventry, and brought his do-it-yourself talents to bear.

His new property is his pride and joy. Its proximity to schools means that when the next generation of Backs comes along, education has been sorted out, while the investments for later life have been made, as befits one who spent nine years in insurance.

It was also a time for rest and explains why Back has spent the past 16 months playing probably the best rugby of his life, with a consistency that so many other leading players have been unable to emulate. When Saracens visit Leicester's Welford Road ground today, they know that they will have to negotiate Back's formidable skills.

Back would recommend a summer off for every player, though perhaps not in the same circumstances. He returned revitalised and, this season, has astonished even hardened observers with the consistency of his play. "I haven't considered this season to be more difficult than any other, to be honest," he said. "I haven't felt overly tired in any game.

"Maybe my attitude over the years has helped. People have been surprised by the training demands of professionalism, but what I have done over a decade may have meant the change was not so great for me as for others. I'm more relaxed now than I have ever been and enjoying my rugby immensely.

"But there's a lot still to play for. Form is important to me because I want to carry what has happened last autumn and in the Five Nations through to the summer." Back is confident enough to query whether England's summer tour schedule is sensible, given the demands that the 1998-99 domestic season will put on players with a World Cup to follow. "But it's on the schedule and I want to go, there's no decision to be made," he said.

That is the key to Neil Back — not a moment to be wasted. It offends the neatness in his make-up, the composure with which he approaches each game, but also the competitive spirit he brings, whether to an international or to a charity game.

Like all the Leicester players, he has had to overcome the change in regime that followed the sudden dismissal of Bob Dwyer as director of rugby. He has done so with a pragmatism which appears to come naturally. But we are not all what we seem. The moment of purest joy for Back came in April last year, when he opened a letter which said that he had been selected for the 1997 British Isles team to tour South Africa.

"I totally broke down," he said. "I'm a matter-of-fact sort of guy, but I was in bits. It was so unexpected." It was, perhaps, the confirmation of his international standing, the final piece in Back's personal jigsaw.

Gatland embarks on reviving fortunes of Ireland

BY DAVID HANDS AND KEVIN FERRIE

WARREN GATLAND, who stepped into the breach as Ireland coach after the resignation in February of Brian Ashton, has been confirmed in the post for the next two years. Gatland, a New Zealander who was director of rugby for Connacht, will take Ireland through the World Cup next year and to the Six Nations Championship of 2000.

He will be joined by Donal Lenihan, who has been appointed manager for the Ireland tour to South Africa this summer. Lenihan takes over from Pat Whelan and his situation will be reviewed before the start of next season.

Whelan resigned as manager on Wednesday, but Lenihan, 38, has worked with him and Gatland as a selector over the past two seasons and the former Ireland lock's standing in the game is unquestioned.

Although Ireland were whitewashed in the Five Nations Championship this season, their success at lower representative levels has created optimism and the new management team will bring a thorough knowledge of the domestic scene to bear.

Attention in Ireland today is focused on Landsdowne Road, where Garryowen and Shannon, two of Limerick's most famous clubs, meet in the first final of the AIB League, Ireland's only all-island rugby competition. Shannon, the reigning champions, are in pursuit of a fourth successive title, while Garryowen are striving to emulate their triumphs of 1992 and 1994.

The populace of Seven Sisters, all 2,500 of them, are likely to follow the same two-mile path to The Gnoll in Neath tomorrow to see whether their village team can achieve the impossible and reach the final of the Swalec Cup at the expense of Llanelli. Seven Sisters have already achieved miracles in becoming the first fourth-division side to reach the semi-finals.

"Realistically, we are dead



Gatland: two-year contract

and buried before we even kick off," David Watts, their secretary, said, "but stranger things have happened and who knows what the day will bring? One thing I do know is that the village will be empty — except for one policeman we will leave behind to make sure nobody gets burgled while we're away."

Mark Chilcott, their flanker and captain, will miss the game after breaking a leg in the quarter-final against Garndiffaith. Llanelli will be without Rupert Moon, their injured scrum half.

This will be Llanelli's twentieth semi-final in the 27 years of the competition and nobody has a better cup record. Certainly not Ebbw Vale, who are favoured to reach their first cup final by beating Newport at Pontypridd this evening after disposing of Cardiff and Swansea earlier. They already have a league double over Newport, including last weekend's game at Rodney Parade, and success in the cup would be the perfect reward for one of the better-managed clubs in Wales.

A comprehensive win on Wednesday over a Currie side that looked utterly demoralised after their Scottish Cup exit three days earlier saw Watsonians stretch their lead in the Tennents Velvet premier division to six points with two matches remaining.

With four points available for a win and a further bonus for scoring four tries, Watsonians could put themselves beyond reach at home to West of Scotland today. In addition, their points differential is such that any sort of win would make them likely champions.

Waiting in the wings for any slip up by the leaders are Melrose, the defending champions, who may yet have the chance to end what has been a disappointing season in traditional fashion. A low-scoring win for West, with the Glasgow side failing to earn a bonus, would give Melrose the chance to slip in the back door.

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Tuigamala has the power to carry Newcastle all the way to the title

'The next few weeks will be a test of the professionalism of each club'

LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO



In football, you have the battle for the title between Manchester United and Arsenal; in English rugby, we have the race between Newcastle and Saracens — and both are generating a huge amount of interest. It's good for the spectators, it's good for the game and the only certainty in the Allied Dunbar Premiership is that it will go to the wire.

I still think that Newcastle will win the Premiership, despite their defeat by Wasps on Wednesday — their second loss in the capital in four days. We went through a similar stage last season after losing to Leicester in a close game: it's a question of how you respond in adversity and, mentally, Newcastle have some very big players.

It will help them if they can get Va'aiga Tuigamala back on the field. He must be so close to full fitness now, having missed several matches, that if he is available for the run-in, it will give them a big lift, physically and mentally. Someone of his stature returning to the squad will provide relief for the entire playing squad.

Saracens have shown the desire to achieve this season, but this weekend is crucial for both clubs. Newcastle have to put their challenge back on track against Bristol tomorrow, while Saracens have to go to Welford Road and win against Leicester. If they do, their confidence will be sky-high.

Yet for all clubs, not just the top two, the next 2½ weeks will be just like a mini-tour. Most of us will have played five games in that period, as you would on tour, and each squad has to maintain a close involvement. Even those who are not selected for every game have a role to play — in training, on the social side, supporting those who take the field. It will be a test of the professionalism of each club, of their response to defeat and victory, of their ability to handle a daunting number of games.

I would sooner be in Newcastle's position: their destiny is still in their own hands. That's what you play rugby for, to win, to be successful. At Wasps, we are still in a precarious position, but the message before the game at Loftus Road on Wednesday was simple: if you are not up for this game, you don't have much of a future in rugby.

It was a huge match, not only because it was against the Premiership's leading team but because of our own lowly position in the first division. It is no coincidence that we have recovered some of last season's championship form since the return to fitness of Alex King and Rob Henderson, who has such a key role in our defence.

For me, as captain, it is good to have a clear horizon for the club game. During the international season, you are pushed and pulled between club and country, but this is the first prolonged period I have been able to spend with Wasps. The same is true of many other England players, who may feel a jaded after the Five Nations Championship, but who get a lift when they return to play with their club colleagues.

There have also been opportunities for the odd television appearance: there's a time and place for that side of a sportsman's career and it's not something I go for a great deal, but it does serve to remind you of the lighter side of life and helps to put a smile on your face. It's a way of relaxing and, if your general wellbeing is good, that will be reflected in your play.

The situation we have at Wasps now, with players challenging for first-team places, is similar to that facing England. Clive Woodward, the coach, has sent letters of availability for the summer tour to the southern hemisphere to a large number of players — something similar to the exercise that the British Isles management went through last year with their extended squad of 62.

I am available, but there is so much talent pushing through, players who have yet to receive an opportunity at home, that this tour represents a significant testing ground. I have seen the withdrawal of so many players from the Celtic nations who have trips to South Africa and Australia lined up and I am not certain where their replacements are coming from.

In England, we have so many claimants that some of the present squad dare not risk pulling out in case they do not recover their positions. Just ask Simon Shaw, or Ben Clarke, at Richmond, whether they want to tour: they are champing at the bit to play for England again, which gives Clive great freedom. He knows what condition some of the players are in and he will do what he believes is right for English rugby.

Preston's accuracy makes the difference

CHRISTIAN CULLEN, the New Zealand full back, scored a last-minute try to give Wellington Hurricanes a 32-29 win over ACT Brumbies in a Super 12 match in Canberra yesterday.

A few minutes earlier, the Australian team, when leading 29-25, had been awarded a penalty in front of the posts, but, rather than take the three points on offer, went for the try and lost possession.

The Brumbies scored four tries, Joe Roff and Owen Finegan each crossing twice, while Wellington managed to get across the opposition line on only two occasions — the other score coming from Martin Leslie.

In the end, it was the reliable kicking of their scrum half, Jon Preston, that made the difference. Preston landed six penalties and two conversions for a personal haul of 22 points.

Andrew Mehrtens scored 20 points for Canterbury Crusaders in their win, by 40-24, over Otago Highlanders, at Christchurch, where the Crusaders were trailing 21-16 at half-time. Mehrtens, who has been in superb form in recent weeks, scored a try and also kicked a conversion, three penalty goals and three dropped goals.

Otago played some high-risk, attacking rugby in the second half, but made too many mistakes and Mehrtens punished them.

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Gatland embarks on reviving fortunes of Ireland

By David Hands and Kevin Ferrie

WARREN GATLAND, w stepped into the breach Ireland coach after the re nation in February of Bre Ashton, has been confirmed the post for the next two year Gatland, a New Zealand who was director of rugby Connacht, will take Irelan through the World Cup ne year and to the Six Nation Championship of 2000.

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'The three-day eventer is usually defined as a Jack of all trades, master of one. Mark Todd is master of them all'

Rehearsals almost over for Bard of Badminton

SIMON BARNES

Talking horse



I never had the chance to watch Shakespeare write, so I don't know if it's true that he never blotted a line. Did he look out of the window for hours between sentences? Did he scribble frenziedly when the words came? Did he go back and improve, did he get stuck, or was it all ridiculously easy?

I would love to know, not because it would give me a few hints on improving my working method, but — well, being a chap who writes a bit himself, it would just be nice to watch. Ha, I would say. I do that. True, the results are different. But it's what I *do*.

Never mind. I may not have watched Shakespeare write, but I *have watched* Mark Todd school a horse. I watched Todd and I thought, ha. I do that. True, the results are different. But it's what I do.

The gap in class is about the same in each case. This is not being humble. It is in fact audacious and ridiculous for any writer to speak of himself and Shakespeare in the same sentence. Same with horse riders and Todd.

No writer *envies* Shakespeare. You can only admire. It is the same with Todd and riders. He is the best competitive horseman practising at present, perhaps the best ever. Francome? Shoemaker? You could argue a case for either against Todd. But you would lose.

Todd is a three-day eventer. A *three-day eventer is always defined* as a Jack of all trades, master of one. The Jack part is dressage, showjumping, endurance and steeplechase; the master part is cross-country, the testing to the limit of horse and rider over the most fiendish and terrifying obstacles that man can devise.

The definition works for every three-day eventer that ever took on the ultimate challenge of horsemanship. But not for Todd. Impossibly, he is master of them all. He could be international class in any one discipline. I need only tell one story to prove this point for all time. I will tell it in a moment, but bear with me. I spent a day watching Todd at work at his base on the far rim of the Thames watershed. He has 25 horses in *his string and he* schools up to eight in a day.

This is not because he finds it hard to delegate. It is because delegation is not an option. Three-day eventing is designed to test (to the limit) the understanding, the trust between horse and rider. And this is something that takes years, not months to establish.

Flashback to Badminton 1991. Badminton, the ultimate test in the ultimate horsey sport, the ultimate examination of the understanding between rider and horse. A couple of days before the competition begins, a rider is injured. The horse, training to the minute, is without a pilot.

So they asked Toddy. A chance *ride round Badminton? Where* even the dressage is an ordeal, even when you are on your own horse? Sure, said Toddy. And so Todd got on Horton Point for the first time in the middle of Badminton week, and — ridiculous isn't it? — rode the horse to victory.

You're just not supposed to be able to do that. If any other rider had done it, we would all have wondered if all the guff about bonds between horses and riders was utter nonsense. It would have been as if the pretentions of the sport had been laid bare. Yet the sport has no pretentions. This was just the Todd factor. There was no need to question the sport, only to salute the finest piece of competition riding in the history of equestrian competition.

So that's Toddy. Long, lean New Zealander, standing 6ft 3in. Two individual Olympic golds, three Badmintons, four Burghleys and a little weariness behind the eyes, not so much from the 42 years as from the recent death of his friend, David Foster, after a fall at an event in Ireland. This is a hard and dangerous life, let no one forget.

And that's me, watching Todd's school. First, two eight-year-olds, longish-range possibles for the Sydney Olympic Games of 2000. A frustrating, talented chestnut, a grey with a better mind but a mite less spark. And Todd, tuning in to Radio Station Equus. As ever.

What did I learn for my own use? Sad to say, absolutely nothing. *What did I understand, so that I* can pass it on to the readers of this column? Sad to say, very little.

Why is Shakespeare so great? Because he has a nice choice of words. Why is Todd so great? Because he has good balance. He never looks big on a horse, odd, when there is so much of him to dispose about an animal. He possesses to a very high degree the ability to move hands, arms and legs independently and with immense precision, while being bucketed about on board a moving conveyance. Quite stunning physical co-ordination, which partly comes from his superb balance.

"And you should see him play squash," one of his grooms said. "Not just the co-ordination. The competitive instinct." Reins rather *longer than is conventional. Not* the guardsman straight back, either: a kind of lanky Red Indian slouch in the saddle. The contact a feather, if that.

Contact? This is horsey jargon, meaning the amount of pressure that the hand puts through the reins on to the bit, the principal line of communication between horse and human. I have never seen such effective riding from so minute, so trifling a contact. If the bit were cobweb, Todd would not break it. "Self-balance," Todd said. "A horse must never rely on his rider for balance." It is riders that make horses fall. Loose horses do not fall and seldom clout an obstacle. This is one of the oldest — and most humbling — rules of horsemanship.

Like all the great secrets of the world, the secret of Mark Todd's horsemanship is that there is no secret. He does exactly the same as the rest of us. Just better, that's all. Oh, and since you ask, he is as decent a fellow as you could meet in a day's march. So that's it. Do I sound sycophantic? Gushing? Over-the-top? Then good. That is exactly what I intended. But it is time to get a little perspective. A little context. How good *is* Mark Todd?

Literature: Shakespeare, Joyce, Dante, Homer. Postwar sport: Ayrton Senna, Carl Lewis, Michael Jordan, Martina Navratilova, Sir Garfield Sobers, Pelé, Steve Redgrave. And Mark Todd.

☐ *So Far, So Good - Mark Todd, the autobiography* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.99, from May 7).



DAVID HARTLEY

Balancing trick: Todd's ability to mould his 6ft 3in frame to a horse has brought him two individual Olympic golds, three Badmintons and four Burghleys

BOXING

Calzaghe expects to finish in style

By Srikumar Sen
Boxing Correspondent



THE power and strength of Joe Calzaghe will be put to the test at the National Ice Rink, Cardiff tonight when he defends his World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight championship against Juan Carlos Gimenez, of Paraguay.

Gimenez has never been stopped in 15 contests, even by Nigel Benn and Chris Eubank. He met Benn four years ago and is 37 now, but, even so, if Calzaghe can win inside the distance, it will be a fairly reliable indication of his ability to become the undisputed world champion.

It was difficult to make a proper assessment of Gimenez during his bout with Benn at the NEC in Birmingham as, during the contest, a riot was in progress between the supporters of Steve Foster and Robert McCraken. However, it was noticeable that Benn's punches were bouncing off his heavy-set opponent.

Benn won by a big points margin that night, but, two years earlier in Manchester, Eubank's victory was not *enthusiastically* received by many at ringside, who felt that he had not done enough to deserve the verdict.

Gimenez is really a light-heavyweight, but this does not daunt Calzaghe. "I'll definitely knock Gimenez out in the fourth or fifth round," Calzaghe, who has won all but two of his 24 contests inside the distance, said. "I'll decide the round just before the fight. There is no one in the super-middleweight division to beat me, they are all pretenders. I am going to win all four belts in the division."

Gimenez, who has lost only eight times in 59 contests, has had only six bouts since meeting Benn. He may not be as resilient as he used to be and Calzaghe could become the first man to stop him. His speed and non-stop aggression could overwhelm his opponent, his southpaw style could also cause problems, but, as the Paraguayan is a cagey survivor, the most likely outcome is a points win for the Welshman.

RUGBY LEAGUE: BRONCOS WING EXPECTS MIXED REACTION ON RETURN TO CENTRAL PARK

Offiah plans to end longest scoring drought

By Christopher Irvine

MARTIN OFFIAH scored 186 tries in four years at Wigan. The London Broncos wing give much for another there tomorrow night to end his longest scoring drought, but nevertheless said of his first return to Central Park since departing in August, 1996: "It wouldn't be my No 1 choice of venue to rediscover my touch."

Four scoreless matches is a famine by his standards. Offiah is stuck on 446 tries, level with Alf Ellaby, and needs four more to become the *third-most prolific try-scorer* behind Brian Bevan (796) and Billy Boston (571). "I can't really see me getting them all on Sunday," he said. "I don't think I'd be cheered off. I'm expecting a mixed reception."

As they showed in outgunning the Broncos in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-finals, Wigan are back in a familiar groove. Contrast their unbeaten form in the JJB Super League with that of Sheffield Eagles, their opponents at Wembley next Saturday, who need to get off the mark away to Huddersfield Giants tomorrow.

With the crowds returning to Wigan, five-figure attendances are also expected at Hull Sharks, where Bradford Bulls are the visitors, and Anfield, St Helens's home for the day against Warrington Wolves.

So far, London have failed to live up to expectations. "We're rebuilding and are missing Shaun Edwards and Josh White at half back," Offiah said. "Perhaps the bookmakers were too generous in making us second-favourites, although we've only conceded ten points in our past two matches.

"Tough defence will be the key. I've played against Wigan three times since I left, but never at Central Park. I scored when we beat them last season, but the 38-8 scoreline in the Challenge Cup showed that they have improved tremendously since then."

Seven different combinations used at half back highlights the Broncos' biggest problem. By sticking with Glen Air, who is expected to recover from injury, and Tulsen Tollett, back permanently from rugby union and Harlequins, London can at least build some continuity after their 14-4 defeat of Warrington last Sunday.

With Henry Paul away, assisting New Zealand in their surprise 22-16 defeat of Australia in Auckland yesterday, Wigan switch Andy Farrell to stand-off half. The promising Lee Gilmour and Simon *Haughton come into the back* row, Denis Betts dropping back to loose forward.

John Kear, the Sheffield coach, has Wembley as his priority, but knows the importance to morale of beating Huddersfield, another team without a league win. "We have been keeping things back for the big day and we won't be fully revealing our hand at Huddersfield, but we do need to go to Wembley on the back of a victory," he said.

St Helens achieved their biggest gate of last season at Anfield and, in a tie-up that will see Liverpool Football Club play some reserve-team games at Knowsley Road for part of next winter, the club is confident of beating the 12,329 figure against Castleford for tomorrow's fixture with Warrington.

Paul Sculthorpe, the St Helens's forward, is described as "50-50" to face his former club. He suffered a *thigh strain in training. Paul David*son, another close-season signing, from Oldham, could make his debut, while Ian Knott comes into the Warrington pack for Brendon Tuuta, who is serving a one-match suspension.

James Lowes, the winner last year of the Man of Steel award, is expected to make his first appearance for Bradford since knee surgery. Hull are level on points with the champions and Tevita Vaikona, another prodigious wing, can expect a typically unforgiving reception on his return to The Boulevard, where he was a crowd favourite.

David Lloyd, the Hull chairman, was criticised severely for selling Vaikona to Bradford for £100,000, but, impressed by the club's bright start to the campaign, the Great Britain Davis Cup tennis captain is prepared to make more money available, *in addition to an initial* £500,000 investment.

"I've told Peter Walsh [the coach] that if there is anybody he needs to make the team stronger, then he can do business," Lloyd said. "I've been impressed with the professional way rugby league people have gone about things. It looks as though Sunday could be a sell-out and I'm happy that we're travelling in the right direction."

HOCKEY

Lee scores hat-trick as English sparkle

England	6
Scotland	1

By Sydney Friskin

ENGLAND played with growing assurance to defeat Scotland 6-1 when the home nations' tournament began at *Milton Keynes yesterday.*

Jason Lee scored a hat-trick as Scotland struggled to counter the speed and opportunism of their opponents. In *the tenth minute, Giles hit a* post, but the Scots were unable to clear their lines and, from the next short corner, the ball ran clear to Lee, who scored. Seven minutes later, Woods laid on the chance for Lee's second goal.

Early in the second half, a good save by Mutton denied Lee his third, but the Scottish goalkeeper could not prevent Giles from slotting in from a short corner in the 42nd minute. Wyatt scored on the follow-up from another short corner for England's fourth goal and Woods added the fifth in the 46th minute.

Suddenly, Scotland came alive up front and a move initiated by Burns enabled Squire to score from close *range in the 52nd minute.* However, with only three minutes remaining, England earned a short corner from which the ball was cleverly switched to Lee to complete his hat-trick.

Bob Crutchley quickened the pulse with two early goals for England Lions in a 3-2 win over Wales in the next match. He scored his first goal in two minutes and added the second five minutes later with a reverse-stick shot from the top of the circle. He was then taken off and replaced by Hall.

Wales fell further behind in the second half when Parnham hit the target from a scramble in the 51st minute before they belatedly made life uncomfortable for the Lions with goals from Edwards and Hacker.

ENGLAND: S Mason, J Wyatt, A Humphrey, B Garrard, W Waugh (capt), J Wallis, J Pidcock, J Lee, D Woods, R Garcia, N Thompson. Substitutes used: C Giles, M Peam, B Sharpe, J Hals.
SCOTLAND: G Mutton; M Leonard (capt), P Webster, D Johnson, G Dunlop, C Wood, C Hector, G Boomer, R Freeland, G Joyce, K Squire. Substitutes used: J Burns, V Monwaha, G Shepherd.
Umpires: S Crisp (England) and M Peary (Wales).

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.00 unless stated

COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier Division: Banbury v Hallen; Didcot v Shortwood; Endsleigh v Kintbury; Highworth v Carterton; North Leigh v Burnham; Swindon Supermarine v Bicester.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First Division: Bilfingham Town v Guisborough; Consett v Seaham Red Star; Durham v Penrith; Easington v Jarrow Roofing, Murton v Morpeth, South Shields v Bedlington Terriers, Stockton v Crook; Tow Law v Dunston Federation.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham v Erith; Chatham v Cray, Herne Bay v Corinthian; Lordswood v Deal, Sheerley Furness v Sheppey; Thamesmead v Ramsgate; Tunbridge Wells v VCD

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bamstaple v Brislington; Bridgwater v Mangotsfield Utd, Chippenham v Blackwell, Elmore v Westbury, Melksham v Chard; Odd Down v Bideford, Taunton v Paulton R; Tiverton v Calne; Torrington v Keynsham

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier Division South: Amersham v Waltham Abbey, Beaconsfield v Harwell; Birmsdown v Harefield, Cockfosters v Hillingdon Boro, Islington v Ruislip Manor, St Margaretsbury v Barkingside; Woodford v Brook House. Premier Division North: Langford v Hoddesdon; London Colney v Potters Bar Town; Royston v Bedford, Toddington v Milton Keynes; Welwyn Garden v Buckingham Athletic

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS: Senior Division: Caddington v The 61 F C; Houghton v Shillington, Kent v Holmer Green; Leverstock Green v Tring; Mercedes Benz v New Bradwell, Totternhoe v Risborough; Winslow v Stony Stratford.

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES: First division: Crystal Palace v Charlton Ath (11.0); Fulham v Norwich City (11.0), Ipswich v Watford (11.0); Portsmouth v Cambridge Utd (11.0); West Ham v QPR (11.0) Second division: Bristol City v Reading (11.0); Swindon v *Tottenham (11.0)*; Wimbledon v Oxford Utd (11.0).

ENDSLEIGH MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Bolehall S v David Lloyd A F C; Chaslyn Hay v Continental Star; Coleshill v Kenilworth, Dudley Sports v G P T (Coventry), Kings Heath v Alvechurch, Knowle v Bilston Community College, Meir K A v Coventry Sphinx, Studley B K L v Wellesbourne, Worcester v Highgate.

OLD BOYS LEAGUE: Premier division: Old Hamptonians v Old Meadonians; Old Ignatians v Old Vaughanians, Old Suttonians v Old Aloysians, Old Tenisonians v C Manning O B Senior first division: Old Manortons v Old Wilsonians; Old Tiffinians v Old Buckwellians, Phoenix O B v Old Isleworthians

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: Carshalton v South Bank; Crouch End Vampires v Norsemen; East Barnet OG v Lloyds Bank; Nat West Bank v Winchmore Hill, Old Bromleians v Ibis; Old Esthamians v Midland Bank; Old Salesians v Barclays Bank; Old Stationers v Bank of England; West Wickham v Lensbury

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Cove v Fort William; Wick Academy v Lossiemouth

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Ashford v Chipstead, Chessington and Hook v Cobham; Cranleigh v Farnham; Godalming and Guilford v Henley Wintney; Netherne v Viking Sports, Ravnes Park Vale v Westfield; Reading Town v Bedfont; Walton Casuals v Sandhurst.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Atherton LR v Glossop North End, Darwen v Kidsgrove, Maine Road v Holker Old Boys; Newcastle Town v Clitheroe, Salford v Mossley; St Helens v Rossendale, Vauxhall G M v Burscough, Warrington v Nantwich Town.

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Burnham Ramblers v Great Wakering; Sawbridgeworth v Concord Rangers. Harry Fisher Memorial Trophy: Semi-final, second leg: Eaton Manor v East Ham.

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bustlehotme v Ludlow T; Malvern T v Kington Town; Stafford T v Lye Town; Stourport S v Ettingshall, Tividale v Wolverhampton; Walsall Wood v Cradley Town; Westfields v Wolverhampton C

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Diss v Halstead; Ely v Felixstowe Port and; Fakenham v Woodbridge Town; Great Yarmouth v Sudbury; Harwich and Parkeston v Stowmarket; Lowestoft v Clacton; Soham v Wetton, Sudbury v *Wroxham; Tiptree v Histon; Warboys v* Gorleston.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Aerostructures v East Cowes; Alc Newbury v Semerton Heath, Totton v Portsmouth, Andover v Thatcham Town, Bournemouth v Lymington; Brockenhurst v Eastleigh, Downton v B.A.T., Gosport v Cowes Sports; Romsey v Wimborne; Whitchurch v Christchurch.

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston v N Spencer; Desborough v Buckingham; Eynesbury v Bourne, Potton v Stamford; S and L Corby v Cogenhoe, Spalding v Stodold; St Neots v Ford Sports, Wellingborough v M Blackstone; Wootton v Holbeach

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Arundel v Peacehaven and Telscombe; Eastbourne Town v Selsey; Hassocks v Mile Oak; Horsham Y M C A v Langney Sports; Pagham v Portfield; Redhill v Ringmer; Shoreham v Hailsham; Whitehawk v Littlehampton; Wick v Burgess Hill

FA COUNTY YOUTH CUP: Final: West Riding v Northumberland

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Boldmere St M v Knypersley V; Kings Norton v Stapenhill, Oldbury v Stratford T, Pelsall V v Barwell; Rocester v Wednesfield; Rushall O v Bloxwich Town, W Mid Police v Pershore T

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Armthorpe Welfare v Ossett Town; Arnold v Curzon Ashton; Dereby v Eccleshill, Matlby M W v Pontefract Cols; Ossett Albion v Liversedge, Pickering v Hatfield Main, Selby v Hucknall Town; Thackley v North Ferriby

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Derry v Finn Harps (7.30).

CRICKET

Britannic Assurance county championship

11.0, third day of four, 104 overs minimum

CHESTER-LE-STREET: Durham v Gloucestershire

CHELMSFORD: Essex v Sussex

CARDIFF: Glamorgan v Kent

SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Northamptonshire

OLD TRAFFORD: Lancashire v Middlesex

LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Worcestershire

TAUNTON: Somerset v Nottinghamshire

THE OVAL: Surrey v Warwickshire.

HEADINGLEY: Yorkshire v Derbyshire

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Allied Dunbar Premiership
First division

Bath v Sale

Leicester v Saracens (2.15)

London Irish v Harlequins

Richmond v Gloucester

Second division

Bedford v Blackheath

Moseley v Fylde

Orrell v Wakefield

Rotherham v Exeter

Waterloo v Coventry

West Hartlepool v London Scottish

Jewson National League
First division

Harrogate v Rosslyn Park

Leeds v Wharfedale (7.30)

Morley v Newbury

Nottingham v Lydney

Otley v London Welsh

Reading v Liverpool St Helens

Rugby v Worcester

Second division north

Aspatria v Walsall

Birmingham/Solihull v Sheffield

Kendal v Sandal

Manchester v Nuneaton

Preston Grasshoppers v Lichfield

Sedgley Park v Hinckley

Stourbridge v Winnington Park

Second division south

Barking v Tabard

Bridgwater v Esher

Camberley v Plymouth

Clifton v Henley

Havant v Met Police

North Walsham v Cheltenham

Redruth v Weston-S-Mare

REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: Combined Services U2 v England Students (12.30, at Twickenham)

THE WILLIS CORRON TROPHY: Royal Navy v Army (at Twickenham).

Swalec Cup
Semi-final

Ebbw Vale v Newport (6.00)

Welsh League
First division

Blackwood v Aberavon (2.30)

Caerphilly v Bonymaen (2.30)

Cross Keys v Maesteg (2.30)

Llandovery v Abertillery (2.30)

Newbridge v Dunvant (2.30)

Pontypool v Treorchy (2.30)

Rumney v (Cardiff Institute) (2.30)

South Wales Police v Merthyr (2.30)

Tennents Premiership
Division 1A

Melrose v Currie

Watsonians v West of Scotland

Division 1B

Edinburgh Acads v Jed-Forest

Stirling County v Heriots F.P

Division 2A

Gala v Kilmarnock

Kelso v Dundee HSFP

Division 2B

Biggar v Musselburgh

Kirkcaldy v Preston Lodge

Division 3A

Aberdeen GSFP v Grangemouth

Selkirk v Gordonians

Division 3B

Glenrothes v Hillhead/Jordanhill

TOMORROW

RUGBY UNION

Allied Dunbar Premiership
First division

Newcastle v Bristol (3.0)

Wasps v Northampton (3.0)

Swalec Cup
Semi-final

Llanelli v Seven Sisters (3.45)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 3.00 unless stated

JJB Super League

Halifax Blue Sox v Castleford Tigers

Huddersfield v Sheffield Eagles (3.30)

Hull Sharks v Bradford Bulls (3.15)

St Helens v Warrington Wolves

Wigan Warriors v London Broncos (6.35)

First division: Featherstone v Whitehaven (3.30); Hunslet v Rochdale Hornets (3.30). Keighley Cougars v Swinton Lions; Leigh Centurions v Hull Kingston Rovers; Widnes Vikings v Wakefield Trinity

Second division: Batley v Workington Town (3.15), Doncaster Dragons v Oldham; York Wasps v Barrow Border Raiders

CRICKET

AXA LEAGUE (one day): Chester-le-Street: Durham v Gloucestershire. Chelmsford: Essex v Sussex. Cardiff: Glamorgan v Kent. Southampton: Hampshire v Northamptonshire. Old Trafford: Lancashire v Middlesex. Leicester: Leicestershire v Worcestershire Taunton: Somerset v Nottinghamshire The Oval: Surrey v Warwickshire. Headingley: Yorkshire v Derbyshire.

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

SCOTLAND: UEFA Under-16 Championship: Group A: Denmark v Sweden; Greece v Iceland Group B: Liechtenstein v Norway; Portugal v Italy Group C: Scotland v Rep of Ireland; Spain v Finland Group D: Croatia v Ukraine, Russia v Israel

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Arsenal Ladies v Tranmere Rov Ladies (2.0); Croydon Ladies v Everton Ladies (2.0); Millwall Lionesses v Bradford Ladies (2.0); Berkhamsted Ladies v Liverpool FC Ladies (2.0)

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: Flora London Marathon

BOWLS: English Bowls Players Association singles championship (in Wellingborough)

CYCLING: Procam Classic Road Race (Beverley, 11.0)

HOCKEY: Milton Keynes: Home Nations Tournament: England B v Scotland (9.30); England v Wales (1.0)

MOTORCYCLING: British superbike championship, second round (at Oulton Park)

MOTOR RACING: British touring car championship (at Silverstone)

SNOOKER: Embassy world championship (at The Crucible, Sheffield)

BOWLS: English Bowls Players Association singles championship (in Wellingborough)

BOXING: World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight championship: J Calzaghe (Newbridge, holder) v J C Giménez (Par) (at National Ice Rink, Cardiff)

CYCLING: Procam Classic Road Race (Beverley, 10.30).

HOCKEY: Home Nations tournament (at Milton Keynes): Scotland v Wales (12.0), England B v England (2.0) Women's international tournament (at Springfields, United States): United States v England, India v Canada.

MOTORCYCLING: British superbike championship, second round (at Oulton Park)

MOTOR RACING: British touring car championship (at Silverstone).

SNOOKER: Embassy world championship (at The Crucible, Sheffield)

SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Eastbourne v Oxford (7.30). Speedway Star Cup: Coventry v Wolverhampton (7.30). Premier League Cup: Berwick v Glasgow (7.0).

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RACING: BAILEY HAS PREPARED STEEPLECHASER WITH WHITBREAD IN MIND

Cariboo Gold to show his mettle

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE traditional jumps season ends today the way it began in earnest six months ago — with a cracking chase sponsored by Whitbread. As often as not, the Whitbread Gold Cup goes to a chaser who arrives at Sandown after a refreshing break and has not been subjected to gruelling races, such as the Scottish National at Ayr, in recent weeks.

The demands posed by almost 3⅝ miles round the Esher track has also tended to favour horses carrying a light weight. Only two — Life Of A Lord and Desert Orchid — have carried more than 10st 5lb to victory in the past decade, and that trend is likely to apply once more in today's testing ground.

All of which helps to highlight the claims of Cariboo Gold, trained by Kim Bailey, who has been well backed throughout this week. The nine-year-old almost certainly thrives at this time of year and he won four chases last spring — including one on heavy ground — but remains on a winning mark.

He was out of sorts earlier this season, in common with a number of Bailey's horses, and raced only three times before bouncing back to his best when third to In Truth in the Kim Muir Chase at the Cheltenham Festival. Bailey, who has won this race with Mr Frisk and Docklands Express, said at the start of the season that Cariboo Gold was crying out for a stamina test in soft ground — and he looks sure to run well off the minimum weight.

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

Somewhat surprisingly, Cool Dawn has been declared for the race but there is still a doubt as to whether the Cheltenham Gold Cup winner will line up on unsuitably soft ground. Even if Robert Alner gives the go-ahead, he looks worth opposing.

After enduring a quiet spell earlier this year, David Nicholson's string has bounced back to somewhere near its best and Call It A Day, a good second under a big weight to Him Of Praise over course and distance in January, is well treated at the weights. He fell at the first fence on his latest start, in the Midlands Grand National, but is usually a sound jumper.

Dom Samourai relishes heavy ground and is suited by distances beyond 3½ miles, as he showed when winning the Greenalls Grand National Trial at Haydock. With conditions in his favour he looks a significant threat — provided he has recovered from his exertions at Ayr on unsuitably fast ground seven days ago.

Samlee is another with form which deserves respect, including over course and distance, but Philip Hobbs's runner has had two tough races in the past three weeks. By contrast, Carole's Crusader has enjoyed a month's break and looks well handicapped judged on placed efforts, notably behind Eulogy at this track six weeks ago.

Although Fine Thyne has been off the course for 133 days and has not raced beyond three miles, he looks particularly well handicapped judged on a winning seasonal reappearance at Stratford and a second to Simply Dashing at Ascot. However, Bailey has laid out **Cariboo Gold** for this race and the hint should be taken.

The meeting at Ripon this afternoon has been abandoned because of waterlogging. Leicester's programme scheduled for today was called off on Thursday.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: CARIBOO GOLD
(3.30 Sandown Park)
Next best: Marton Moss
(6.45 Sandown Park)

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



ALMUSHTARAK, ridden by Ray Cochrane, romps clear of Crystal Hearted to win the Chrysalis Group 30th Anniversary Mile at Sandown Park yesterday (Chris McGrath writes). Cochrane had confessed to Kamil Mahdi, the horse's trainer, that he had been too hasty in taking the lead at Newmarket on his previous start, when collared on the post by Apprehension. Cochrane compensated with a beautiful ride, pouncing on Crystal Hearted inside the last and stretching five lengths clear. The group two success is the biggest enjoyed by Mahdi, multiple champion trainer in his native Kuwait, since he secured a licence to operate from Newmarket last May. Yesterday's card was staged in honour of the Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Centre. Whether it has any use for the music of Benny Andersson must be open to question, but the Abba singer's colours nonetheless prospered with Mondschein in the Lincoln Mild Cigars Fillies' Maiden Stakes.

No fears about Apprehension

SANDOWN PARK
CHANNEL 4

2.50: Madison County has always been well regarded by Philip Hobbs, but has taken time to justify the trainer's confidence. However, the blinkered mud lover has won three of his last four starts — all over today's trip — and has been raised only 5lb since his most recent comfortable success at Chepstow. Flat Top is on a roll having won three races inside the past 12 days, but races here from 6lb out of the handicap. Josh Gifford's Headwind was impressive when winning over course and distance in a lesser grade last time and has run well on soft ground, while The Land Agent is consistent but lacks pace.

3.30: see above

4.10: Muhtathir was John Gosden's best two-year-old last term, and although the stable has made a quiet start to the season the trainer can enhance his excellent record in this race. His best form came when he was an excellent 2½ lengths second to Second Empire, the Derby favourite, at Longchamp on unsuitably quick ground. He probably had not recovered from that race when disappointing in the Royal Lodge Stakes. Supporters of Xaar will be hoping for a bold show from Circus, who showed improved form when third behind the 2,000 Guineas favourite in the Craven Stakes. However, the biggest danger could be posed by Eco Friendly, who flourished for Barry Hills last autumn and ended up winning a French group three race on heavy ground.

4.45: Germano — a son of Generous — should not be inconvenienced by today's ground if his pedigree is any guide and Geoff Wragg's runner has sound claims judged on his narrow second to Romanov at Haydock and Arabian Story at Newbury. **Apprehension** showed his liking of soft ground when winning the Earl of Sefton Stakes at Newmarket last week, and the form was boosted by the victory yesterday of the runner-up, Almushtarak. Riyadian has run just three times in the last two seasons, but is a classy performer at his best and cannot be ruled out. Garuda's two successes have come in the soft, the latest at Kempton 12 days ago, but this is a tougher test.

RICHARD EVANS

SANDOWN PARK

THUNDERER

2.15 Krisamba
2.50 The Land Agent
3.30 Celtic Abbey
4.10 Courteous
4.45 **GERMANO** (nap)
5.15 Cool As A Cucumber
5.45 Aller Moor
6.15 Sunley Sense
6.45 Robin Goodfellow

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.30 **COOL DAWN.**

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 .. B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing. J if jumps. F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating.

GOING: HEAVY — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW 5F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST — SIS

2.15 DAVID LLOYD LEISURE HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £9,538: 1m 14yd) (10 runners)

101	(4)	54211-	CLOSE UP 192 (D,F,S) (I Cameron) J Dunlop 9-7	T Quinn	95
102	(10)	5611-	FLORAZI 182 (F,G) (P Winfield) J Dunlop 9-4	Pat Eddery	108
103	(5)	224-3	ARPEGGIO 29 (BF) (Lucayan Stud) R Hannon 9-2	O Peslier	104
104	(8)	36352-1	WUXI VENTURE 17 (D,S) (Dr F Chao) S Woods 9-0	N Day	102
105	(1)	00-1161	AMBIGUOUS 9 (D,S) (A Saeed Bul Hab) D Loder 9-0	L Dettori	107
106	(2)	342434-	SEA MAGIC 182 (S) (R Richards) B Hills 8-12	M Hills	104
107	(9)	31242-0	INDIAN MISSILE 11 (F) (R Villers) L Chappell 8-12	J Reid	95
108	(7)	0101-	SUNLEY SEEKER 218 (G) (Mrs J Jeyes) M Channon 8-10	A Mackay	89
109	(6)	035-42	KRISAMBA 5 (B Schmidt-Bodner) B Meehan 8-7	P Robinson	94
110	(3)	026410-	BOBBYDAZZLE 226 (D,G) (Mrs B Cohen) Dr J Scargill 8-6	J Quinn	97

BETTING: 5-2 Florazi, 7-2 Ambiguous, 13-2 Arpeggio, 7-1 Wuxi Venture, 8-1 Close Up, 10-1 Sea Magic, Sunley Seeker, 14-1 others.

1997: AMYAS 8-13 M Hills (6-1) B Hills 11 ran

2.50 BREWERS FAYRE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
C4
(£13,900: 2m 4f 110yd) (6 runners)

201	1P401R	HOH WARRIOR 7 (G,S) (D Allport & R Michaelson) C Brooks 7-11-10	G Bradley	145
202	-3F1121	MADISON COUNTY 12 (V,D,G,S) (B Peppiatt) P Hobbs 8-10-11	R Dunwoody	132
203	5342431	THE LAND AGENT 17 (S) (D Bare) J Mullins 7-10-9	M A Fitzgerald	141
204	2131-11	PEACE LORD 36 (D,G) (Sir Peter & Lady Gibbings) Mrs D Haine 8-10-4	A Maguire	135
205	2/2-421	HEADWIND 25 (CD,G,S) (Pell Mell Partners) J Gifford 7-10-4	P Hide	122
206	5F2P111	FLAT TOP 5 (D,S) (Major M Watson) M W Easterby 7-10-0 (5ex)	A Dobbin	143

Long handicap: Flat Top 9-8.

BETTING: 9-4 Flat Top, 7-2 Headwind, 4-1 Madison County, 11-2 The Land Agent, 7-1 Hoh Warrior, Peace Lord.

1997: KENMORE-SPEED 10-10-3 R Guest (7-2 co fav) Mrs S Smith 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

Hoh Warrior refused at Ayr, previously beat Strong Paladin 10l in novice handicap chase at Ascot (2m 3f 110yd, good). Madison County beat Naiysari 18l in 4-runner handicap chase at Chepstow (3m 3f 110yd, heavy). The Land Agent beat Stormy Passage 4l in 3-runner novice chase at Ascot (2m 3f 110yd, good to soft). Peace Lord beat Coolteen Hero 2l in 5-runner handicap chase at Folkestone (2m, good). Headwind beat Clever Remark 5l in 6-runner novice chase at Sandown (2m 4f 110yd, good). Flat Top beat Callemoy 17l in 10-runner novice chase at Hexham (3m 1f, heavy).

THE LAND AGENT is at last fulfilling his potential

3.30 42ND WHITBREAD GOLD CUP HANDICAP CHASE
C4
(Grade III: £63,490: 3m 5f 110yd) (20 runners)

301	P54U410	GO BALLISTIC 37 (F,G,S) (Mrs B Lockhart) J O'Shea 9-11-10	A Dobbin	155
302	-0111P1	COOL DAWN 37 (F,G,S) (Hon Miss D Harding) R Alner 10-11-8	A Thornton	172
303	-43P332	EUDIPE 7 (G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 6-11-0	A P McCoy	166
304	23411PF	COURT MELODY 21 (B,C,G,S) (M Coburn) P Nicholls 10-10-11	T J Murphy	154
305	-P1P404	YORKSHIRE GALE 10 (C,F,G,S) (B Naylor) J Gifford 12-10-11	—	153
306	1342140	DOM SAMOURAI 7 (B,S) (B Kilpatrick) M Pipe 7-10-11	C Maude	149
307	-3224F3	CALL IT A DAY 12 (G,S) (Mrs J Lane) D Nicholson 8-10-10	A Maguire	155
308	46-P03U	SCOTTON BANKS 21 (G,S) (J Bray) T Easterby 9-10-7	L Wyer	119
309	3212-16	LIVELY KNIGHT 37 (G,S) (A Weller) J Gifford 9-10-6	L Aspell (3)	143
310	U11-4PF	CELTIC ABBEY 21 (F,G,S) (G Powell) Miss V Williams 10-10-5	R Johnson	155
311	14F-125	FINE THYNE 133 (F,G,S) (P Wiegand) Mrs A Perrett 9-10-4	M A Fitzgerald	153
312	4-12U2P	KAMIKAZE 7 (G,S) (Major B Gatensbury) K Bailey 8-10-1	Mr R Wakley (3)	149
313	5113336	SAMLEE 7 (V,CD,F,G,S) (White Lion Partnership) P Hobbs 9-10-1	R Dunwoody	161
314	1421P22	CAROLE'S CRUSADER 28 (B,F,G,S) (C Sidsworth) D Gandolfo 7-10-1	C Llewellyn	165
315	35-5604	ST MELLION FAIRWAY 21 (G,S) (St Mellion Ltd) P R Webber 9-10-0	J A McCarthy	145
316	-RU5P54	AARDWOLF 17 (C,G,S) (Lady Camilla Dempster) C Brooks 7-10-0	G Bradley	154
317	31-3P42	CARIBOO GOLD 39 (B,F,G,S) (Mrs S Nelson) K Bailey 9-10-0	N Williamson	155
318	333F145	TELL THE NIPPER 12 (B,F,S) (Mrs S McCloy) M Hourigan (Ire) 7-10-0	K Whelan	139
319	-U61PPP	HILLWALK 21 (F,G,S) (M Stone) R Curtis 12-10-0	J Leech	128
320	2-511BP	WINTER BELLE 21 (G,S) (Mrs M Burt) J Howard Johnson 10-10-0	Mr C Bonner (3)	132

Long handicap: Aardwolf 9-11, Cariboo Gold 9-11, Tell The Nipper 9-9, Hillwalk 9-5, Winter Belle 8-7.

BETTING: 4-1 Cool Dawn, 7-1 Cariboo Gold, 15-2 Carole's Crusader, 8-1 Eudipe, Call It A Day, 10-1 Dom Samourai, Tell The Nipper, 14-1 others.

1997: HARWELL LAD 8-10-0 Mr R Nuttall (14-1) R Alner 9 ran

FORM FOCUS

Cool Dawn beat Strong Promise 1¾l in Tote Gold Cup at Cheltenham (3m 2f, good). Eudipe 1¾l 2nd of 18 to Baronet in Scottish National at Ayr (4m 1f, good) with Samlee (3lb better off) 30l 6th, Dom Samourai (levels) 45l 11th and Kamikaze (1lb better off) pulled up. Call It A Day 9¼l 3rd of 22 to Bobbyjo in handicap chase at Fairyhouse (3m 5f, good to soft) with Tell The Nipper (4lb worse off) 14l 5th. Lively Knight 26l 6th of 8 to Cyfor Malta in chase at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good), previously beat Glemot 7l in 9-runner handicap chase at Wincanton (3m 1f 110yd, good) with Carole's Crusader (1lb better off) 27l 4th and Cool Dawn (6lb worse off) 47l 7th. Fine Thyne 16l 5th of 9 to Senor El Betrutti in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 5f, good). Carole's Crusader 3l 2nd of 4 to Macgeorge in handicap chase at Newbury (3m, good to soft). St Mellion Fairway beaten a distance 4th of 37 to Earth Summit in Grand National at Aintree (4m 4f, heavy). Cariboo Gold 3½l 2nd of 14 to In Truth in amateur handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good to soft).

CARIBOO GOLD gets the vote though his stamina has to be taken on trust

Sandown Park has three options for today's card, dependent on an inspection at 7.45 this morning. If there are no problems, the nine-race card will go ahead as scheduled: if the five-furlong course is unraceable, the last two races will be abandoned: if the remainder of the Flat track is unraceable, there will be four steeplechases only.

4.10 THRESHER CLASSIC TRIAL
C4
(Group III: 3-Y-O: £40,707: 1m 2f 7yd) (4 runners)

401	(1)	02211-	ECO FRIENDLY 150 (S) (W Gredley) B Hills 8-12	M Hills	104
402	(2)	040-3	CIRCUS 9 (S Manana) C Brittain 8-10	M J Kinane	111
403	(4)	41-	COURTEOUS 206 (G) (H R H Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 8-10	T Quinn	97+
404	(3)	61120-	MUHTATHIR 209 (C,G,S) (H al-Maktoum) J Gosden 8-10	R Hills	128

BETTING: 2-1 Muhtathir, 9-4 Eco Friendly, 5-2 Circus, 5-1 Courteous.

1997: VOYAGERS QUEST 8-12 J Reid (11-2) P Chapple-Hyam 6 ran

FORM FOCUS

Eco Friendly beat Ten Bob 8l in group 3 at Saint-Cloud (1m, heavy). Circus 5¼l 3rd to Xaar in group 3 at Newmarket (1m, soft). Courteous beat Majestic Hills ¾l in maiden at Salisbury (1m, good). Muhtathir 6¾l last of 8 to Teapot Row in group 2 at Ascot (1m, good).

MUHTATHIR can give John Gosden another winner of this Derby trial

4.45 MARRIOTT HOTELS GORDON RICHARDS STAKES
C4
(Group III: £19,200: 1m 2f 7yd) (5 runners)

501	(2)	6340-1	APPREHENSION 10 (F,S) (Sheikh Mohammed) D Loder 4-8-13	L Dettori	127
502	(3)	41535-1	GARUDA 12 (D,S) (B Demuyser) J Dunlop 4-8-10	Pat Eddery	128
503	(5)	211224-	GERMANO 239 (BF,D,F,S) (Baron G von Ullmann) G Wragg 5-8-10	M Hills	126
504	(1)	2/1/13-	RIYADIAN 300 (D,F,G,S) (H R H Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 6-8-10	T Quinn	118
505	(4)	211-	NICOLE PHARLY 342 (F,G) (M Nagashima) M Stoute 4-9-0	O Peslier	111

BETTING: 9-4 Riyadian, 3-1 Germano, 7-2 Garuda, 5-1 Apprehension, Nicole Pharly

1997: SASURU 4-9-1 M Hills (13-2) G Wragg 7 ran

FORM FOCUS

Apprehension beat Almushtarak neck in 7-runner group 3 stakes at Newmarket (1m 1f, soft). Garuda beat Ukraine Venture 9l in 6-runner stakes (listed) at Kempton (1m 2f, soft). Germano 3¾l 4th of 11 to Devil River Peek in group 3 stakes at Baden-baden (1m 2f, soft). Riyadian 7l 3rd of 4 to Helissio in group 1 stakes at Saint-cloud (1m 4f, heavy).

APPREHENSION is a confident selection after Almushtarak's win here yesterday

5.15 PIZZA HUT HANDICAP CHASE (£3,566: 2m) (9 runners)

601	-2112F2	PARLIAMENTARIAN 25 (BF,C,D,F,G,S) (J Wales) T Casey 9-11-10	A Thornton	117
602	0R45141	ROVESTAR 12 (B,D,G,S) (G Burrell) C Popham 7-11-10 (7ex)	R Johnson	122
603	P483245	MAN MOOD 53 (G,S) (J Robbins) C Brooks 7-11-5	M Berry (5)	114
604	F063235	WHO'S TO SAY 12 (D,F,S) (T Pritchard) P Pritchard 12-11-5	Dr P Pritchard	108
605	541126-	QUICK QUOTE 357 (F,G) (M Barlow) Mrs I McKie 8-11-2	DOUBTFUL	105
606	0360326	NORTHERN SADDLER 12 (D,F,G,S) (R Hodges) R Hodges 11-10-13	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
607	430-42P	CRAFTY CHAPLAIN 252 (D,F,G,S) (Champ Chicken) D McCain 12-10-12	P Hide	100
608	663F11	COOL AS A CUCUMBER 12 (D,S) D Sherwood 7-10-10 (7ex)	M Richards	106
609	3P03031	D MY LOVE 51 (D,G) (Longdon Racing Club) N Babbage 7-10-0	DOUBTFUL	109

BETTING: 3-1 Rovestar, 7-2 Cool As A Cucumber, 4-1 Parliamentarian, 7-1 Northern Saddler, 14-1 others

5.45 BEEFEATER NOVICES CHASE (£4,599: 3m) (9 runners)

1	1-12211	ALLER MOOR 30 (D,F,G,S) (G Keirle) R Alner 7-11-2	A Thornton	128
2	2-U31PU	BAYLINE STAR 3 (S) (J McCarthy) Miss H Knight 8-11-2	C Maude	117
3	3R3UU33	BENBULBIN 30 (C Tilly) J Mullins 8-11-2	A Bates (5)	109
4	5-6F11U	CALM DOWN 26 (BF,S) (Mrs A Wates) T Casey 7-11-2	—	[illegible]
5	0000564	CHALLENGER ROW 12 (S) (Mrs L Jewell) Mrs L Jewell 8-11-2	G Supple (5)	114
6	-5U1PP1	GRANGE COURT 60 (D,F,G,S) (DSM Demolition) I Williams 8-11-2	R Johnson	129
7	0/2P-2P	QUAFF 32 (A Weller) J Gifford 8-11-2	L Aspell (3)	—
8	1-12132	TORDUFF EXPRESS 10 (BF,D,G,S) (Two Plus Two) P Nicholls 7-11-2	A Maguire	127
9	26PP3U0	FORTYTWO DEE 10 (Triumph International Ltd) N Smith 8-10-11	M Sharratt	106

BETTING: 6-4 Aller Moor, 4-1 Calm Down, 9-2 Torduff Express, 6-1 Bayline Star, 7-1 Grange Court, 16-1 others.

6.15 WHITBREAD MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O: £3,485: 5f 6yd) (6 runners)

1	(6)		A LA PERRUCHE (Ivory & Ledoux Ltd) R Curtis 8-11	J Lowe	—
2	(4)	5	BARTHOLOMEW 14 (E Fenaroli) T Naughton 8-11	O Peslier	82
3	(2)		MONKSTON POINT (D Broomfield) D Arbuthnot 8-11	S Whitworth	—
4	(1)		MUJADENE (F Allison) B Meehan 8-11	K Fallon	—
5	(3)		SUNLEY SENSE (J Sunley) M Channon 8-11	T Quinn	—
6	(5)	0	TIMBERHILL 28 (Timberhill Racing Partnership) M Channon 8-11	R Hughes	79

BETTING: 2-1 Mujadene, 11-4 Sunley Sense, 5-1 Timberhill, 11-2 Bartholomew, 7-1 Monkston Point, 10-1 A La Perruche

1997: SMOOTH SAILING 8-11 J Fortune (20-1) K McAuliffe 10 ran

6.45 WHITBREAD HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £7,387: 5f 6yd) (10 runners)

1	(4)	01544-	EASTERN PURPLE 219 (F) (T Chang) R Fahey 9-7	O Pears	94
2	(7)	5140-45	MARTON MOSS 7 (D,F,S) (T Bennett) T Easterby 9-0	K Fallon	87
3	(2)	2523-1	NIGHT SHOT 28 (D,S) (J Smith) I Balding 9-0	Martin Dwyer	88
4	(6)	31225-0	HIGH CARRY 14 (CD,F,S) (J M G Promotions Ltd) N Tinkler 8-11	Kim Tinkler	81
5	(9)	50030-5	HILL MAGIC 14 (F) (M Jackson Bloodstock Ltd) D Elsworth 8-10	R Ffrench	83
6	(5)	5010-	LADY CHARLOTTE 191 (F) (D Elsworth) D Elsworth 8-9	N Pollard (7)	77
7	(8)	142261-	SUPREME ANGEL 192 (D,G,S) (Least Moved Ptnrs) M Muggeridge 8-8	L Dettori	88
8	(10)	010-2	ROBIN GOODFELLOW 14 (S) (M Gough) P Walwyn 8-7	Pat Eddery	89
9	(3)	-113115	FAST FRANC 57 (D,S) (Mr & Mrs D Flatney) T Naughton 8-6	O Peslier	83
10	(1)	45024-4	EMPEROR NAHEEM 9 (Mrs E Meehan) B Meehan 8-4	J Quinn	92

Long handicap: Emperor Naheem 8-2.

BETTING: 7-2 Emperor Naheem, 4-1 Night Shot, 6-1 Robin Goodfellow, 7-1 Supreme Angel, 8-1 Marton Moss, Hill Magic, 10-1 Eastern Purple, 12-1 others.

1997: HATTAB 8-13 R Hughes (16-1) P Walwyn 10 ran

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
G Wragg	6	32	18.8	Pat Eddery	51	223	22.9
M Stoute	23	124	18.5	L Dettori	48	211	22.7
J Dunlop	18	104	17.3	K Fallon	11	60	18.3
I Balding	14	87	16.1	M J Kinane	10	57	17.5
J Gosden	16	103	15.5	M Hills	14	107	13.1
S Woods	4	26	15.4	R Hills	13	101	12.9

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Sandown Park

Going: heavy

2.05 (1m 14yd) 1, I'M PROPOSIN (T Quinn, 1-2 fav); 2, Bering Gifts (Pat Eddery, 5-2); 3, Meaux (D Harrison, 9-1). ALSO RAN: 40-1 Belcade (4th). 4 ran. 5l, 8l, 2l. J Dunlop at Arundel. Tote: £1.40. DF: £1.50. CSF: £1.80.

2.35 (1m 14yd) 1, THERHEA (A Whelan, 11-4 fav); 2, Mr Majica (K Fallon, 12-1); 3, Secret Ballot (M Baird, 33-1). ALSO RAN: 3-1 Gulf Shaadi, 9 Star Manager (5th), 12 Groom's Gordon, Out Of Sight (4th), Zugudi, 16 Queen's Pageant, 33 Song Of Skye (6th). 10 ran. ¾l, 2l, hd, 1¼l, 3½l. B Millman at Cullompton. Tote: £3.30; £1.40, £4.80, £4.70. DF: £40.60. Trio: £783.30. CSF: £32.01. Tricast: £794.06.

3.10 (1m 14yd) 1, ALMUSHTARAK (R Cochrane, 4-1); 2, Crystal Hearted (A McGlone, 8-1); 3, Handsome Ridge (L Dettori, 13-2). ALSO RAN: 100-30 fav Crimson Tide (6th), 6 Muchea (5th), 13 Gothenberg, 10 Polar Prince (4th), 14 Illusion, 50 Fiametta. 9 ran. 5l, ½l, 3l, nk, 5l. K Mahdi at Newmarket. Tote: £3.70; £1.10, £2.10, £2.80. DF: £22.10. Trio: £66.80. CSF: £31.81.

3.40 (2m 78yd) 1, IVOR'S FLUTTER (N Pollard, 4-1 jt-fav); 2, Dovedon Star (K Fallon, 4-1 jt-fav); 3, Sea Freedom (S Drowne, 11-2). ALSO RAN: 9-2 Invermark (6th), 9 Whitechapel (5th), 10 Galapino, 14 Bowcliffe Court (4th), 16 Sudest. 8 ran. Nk, 3l, sh hd, 20l, 4l. D Elsworth at Whitcombe. Tote: £4.70; £1.70, £1.50, £1.60. DF: £8.70. CSF: £17.93. Tricast: £78.81.

4.10 (1m 2f 7yd) 1, MONDSCHEIN (Pat Eddery, 5-2); 2, Akanta (R Cochrane, 10-1); 3, Charroux (J Reid, 5-4 fav). ALSO RAN: 6-1 Le Rochelle (5th), 8 Mannequin (4th), 20 Poppy Too (6th). 6 ran. 3l, 1½l, 2½l, 5l, 9l. J Dunlop at Arundel. Tote: £3.30; £1.30, £3.70. DF: £11.90. CSF: £23.64.

4.40 (5f 6yd) 1, SNAP CRACKER (A Whelan, 11-1); 2, Palace Green (T Quinn, 11-4 jt-fav); 3, Kingfishers Bonnet (D R McCabe, 25-1). ALSO RAN: 11-4 jt-fav Double Choice (4th), 3 Donssio (6th), 7 True Love Ways (5th). 6 ran. 1½l, 2½l, 5l, 20l, 13l. M Quinn at Wantage. Tote: £13.70; £2.80, £1.60. DF: £20.40. CSF: £37.76.

5.15 (5f 6yd) 1, THE GAY FOX (T Quinn, 7-2 fav); 2, Mister Jolson (S Drowne, 12-1); 3, Strat's Quest (R Mullen, 12-1). ALSO RAN: 6-1 Johnny Staccato, 13 Lord High Admiral, 7 Patsy Grimes (4th), 10 Dande Flyer, Just Bob, Stuffed (5th), 16 Barrarak (6th), Sally Green, 20 Butrinto, Sir Joey. 13 ran. NR: Noballino. ¾l, nk, 9l, ¾l, 1l. B McMahon at Tamworth. Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £5.00, £2.30. DF: £40.60. Trio: £79.30. CSF: £45.84. Tricast: £334.00.

Placepot: £71.70. Quadpot: £12.60.

Perth

Going: heavy

2.15 (2m 110yd) 1, LA BRIGANTINE (Mr C Bonner, 5-1); 2, Woodfield Gale (9-2 fav); 3, Handsome Anthony (5-1). ALSO RAN: 8-1 The Lady Scores (4th). 13 ran. NR: Camden Moon, Katsar. 5l, 6l. R Buckler. Tote: £5.40; £2.30, £2.10, £2.30. DF: £12.10. Trio: £19.90. CSF: £23.47.

2.45 (2m 4f 110yd) 1, RUBER (G Lee, 8-1); 2, Ifalleisefails (9-2); 3, Monkey Wench (7-1). ALSO RAN: 7-2 fav Crabbie's Pride (4th). 11 ran. NR: Funetto, North Pride, This Is My Life, Triennium. 7l, 5l. R Thomson. Tote: £8.70; £1.90, £2.80, £1.90. DF: £20.40. Trio: £34.00. CSF: £41.11. Tricast: £248.58.

3.20 (3m) 1, DAVY BLAKE (A S Smith, 11-4); 2, Blue Charm (7-4 fav); 3, Judicious Captain (8-1). ALSO RAN: 100-30 Berlone (4th). 6 ran. 10l, 28l. T Dalgetty. Tote: £3.60; £1.90, £1.80. DF: £3.30. CSF: £6.53.

3.50 (2m 4f 110yd) 1, COTTSTOWN BOY (Mr M Bradburne, 4-1); 2, Course Doctor (9-4 fav); 3, Sunrise Sensation (12-1). ALSO RAN: 8-1 Southern Cross (4th). 9 ran. NR: Brother of Iris, Glevum, Jack Robbo, My Buster, Nizaal. 6l, 3l. Mrs S Bradburne. Tote: £5.10; £1.50, £1.70, £5.50. DF: £3.90. Trio: £85.40. CSF: £13.28. Tricast: £93.14.

4.20 (3m) 1, BOLD STATEMENT (P Carberry, 3-1); 2, Saxon Mead (9-1); 3, Solsgirth (9-1). ALSO RAN: 2-1 fav Master Chet. 8 ran. NR: Broadwater Boy, Eid, Gale Force, Noble Norman, Swing Quartet, Tour Leader, Woodford Gale. 4l, dist. T Forster. Tote: £4.10; £1.30, £1.80, £1.40. DF: £14.80. Trio: £80.50. CSF: £22.99. Tricast: £167.74.

4.55 (2m 110yd) 1, FROSTY LIGHT (B Grattan, 4-1); 2, Petersen House (12-1); 3, Devonshire (7-1). ALSO RAN: 6-5 fav Percy Parkeeper (4th). 10 ran. NR: Commanche Trix, Excursion, Glacial Princess, Pampered Gale. Hd, 2l. P Beaumont. Tote: £7.00; £1.30, £3.70, £2.00. DF: £41.10. Trio: £68.30. CSF: £46.96.

5.25 (2m 110yd) 1, RED HOT INDIAN (R Supple, 6-1); 2, Noshinannikin (9-4 fav); 3, The Gardener (7-2). ALSO RAN: 16-1 Little Fencote (4th). 9 ran. NR: Ballina Boy, Gnmaldi Lad, Mansol, Prancing Blade, Solway Rose. ½l, 5l. L Lungo. Tote: £5.30; £1.10, £1.90, £1.40. DF: £9.00. Trio: £9.60. CSF: £18.85.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £39,051.86 carried forward to Sandown Park today). Placepot: £123.00. Quadpot: £23.90.

Carlisle

Going: good to soft (good in places)

2.25 (5f) 1, Sammal (J Fortune, 4-1); 2, First Musical (8-1); 3, Springs Noblequest (16-1). Saphire 3-1 fav. 18 ran. NR: Ice. 1l, J Glover. Tote: £7.60; £3.10, £2.10, £7.00. DF: £29.20. CSF: £42.71. Trio: £201.00 - part won (pool of £254.56 carried forward to Sandown 3.30 tomorrow).

2.55 (6f 206yd) 1, High Premium (R Winston, 3-1 fav); 2, Allinson's Mate (6-1); 3, Monica's Choice (8-1). 12 ran. NR: Yeoman Oliver. 4l, 1½l. R Fahey. Tote: £2.80; £2.00, £2.10, £3.30. DF: £16.50. Trio: £56.30. CSF: £21.19.

3.30 (1m 1f 61yd) 1, Celestial Welcome (A Culhane, 11-4 fav); 2, Castle Friend (8-1); 3, River Bear (6-1); 4, Miss Salsa Dancer (7-1). 16 ran. ¾l, ¾l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £4.00; £1.60, £1.50, £1.60, £1.70. DF: £20.00. Trio: £59.10. CSF: £24.41. Tricast: £125.95.

4.00 (7f 214yd) 1, Night Of Glass (K Darley, 3-1 fav); 2, Gymcrak Premiere (8-1); 3, High Spirits (14-1). 12 ran. ½l, ½l. J Eyre. Tote: £3.10; £2.10, £2.70, £4.60. DF: £15.00. Trio: £113.80. CSF: £25.76. Tricast: £277.27.

4.30 (7f 214yd) 1, Strachin (R Ffrench, 5-1; Our Newmarket Correspondent's nap); 2, North Ofthe Border (10-1); 3, Worth The Effort (16-1). Madmun 2-1 fav. 14 ran. 2l, 1l. L Cumani. Tote: £5.80; £1.10, £4.60, £5.30. DF: £61.20. Trio: £55.90. CSF: £53.74.

5.05 (5f 207yd) 1, Birchwood Sun (J Weaver, 8-1); 2, Mustang (16-1); 3, Skyers Flyer (20-1); 4, Marylebone (20-1). Unshaken (5th) 5-1 fav. 20 ran. Sh hd, ½l. M Dods. Tote: £6.60; £1.80, £9.10, £17.00, £10.20. DF: £97.70. Trio: £367.90. CSF: £128.98. Tricast: £2,385.63.

Placepot: £158.20. Quadpot: £19.80.

Ludlow

Going: good (good to soft in places)

5.30 (2m hdle) 1, Cadbury Castle (L Cummins, 9-2); 2, Hotspur Street (15-2); 3, Pardan (25-1). Sahhar 4-1 fav. 17 ran. 1½l, 3½l. G Charles-Jones. Tote: £4.00; £2.10, £5.10, £12.00. DF: £14.50. Trio: £63.80. CSF: £34.66.

6.00 (2m 4f ch) 1, Mr Strong Gale (T J Murphy, 6-4 fav); 2, Mister Drum (15-2); 3, Coolteen Hero (13-2). 5 ran. NR: Maple Dancer. 8l, 19l. P Nicholls. Tote: £2.10; £1.10, £2.90. DF: £8.20. CSF: £10.84.

Taunton

Going: soft

5.40 (3m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Saafi (Mr S Durack, 9-4 fav); 2, Emperor Buck (5-1); 3, Dubai Dolly (14-1). 13 ran. NR: Noted Strain. 4l, 3½l. R Baker. Tote: £3.20; £1.30, £2.20, £3.10. DF: £10.30. Trio: £78.80. CSF: £13.51. Tricast: £124.18.

6.10 (3m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Woodstock Wanderer (M A Fitzgerald, 11-2); 2, Fabulon (9-4 fav); 3, Night Time (8-1). 8 ran. NR: Frankie Harry. 24l, 8l. P Bowen. Tote: £4.90; £1.90, £1.60, £1.90. DF: £7.30. Trio: £28.70. CSF: £17.52. Tricast: £90.73.

☐ Peintre Celebre, the champion racehorse of Europe in 1997, returns to action in the group one Prix Ganay at Longchamp tomorrow.

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: **Pontefract** (first race, 2.45), **Southwell** (AW, 2.30). TUESDAY: Bath (2.00), **Nottingham** (2.15), **Ascot** (BBC, 5.30), Huntingdon (5.15). WEDNESDAY: **Ascot** (BBC, 2.00), Exeter (2.20), Plumpton (2.10), Cheltenham (5.25), Kelso (5.45). THURSDAY: **Brighton** (2.00), **Redcar** (2.10), **Wolverhampton** (AW, 2.20). FRIDAY: **Newmarket** (C4, 2.05), **Musselburgh** (2.15), Newton Abbot (1.55), Bangor (5.45), Sedgefield (6.00). SATURDAY: **Newmarket** (C4, 2.00), **Haydock Park** (1.10), **Thirsk** (2.05), Hereford (2.15), Hexham (2.20), Uttoxeter (1.45). SUNDAY: **Newmarket** (C4, 2.00), **Hamilton Park** (2.10), **Salisbury** (2.20)

Flat meetings in bold

MARKET RASEN

THUNDERER

2.10 Members Welcome. 2.40 Caracol. 3.10 Six Clerks. 3.45 Boardroom Shuffle. 4.20 Skycab. 4.55 Eid. 5.30 Montel's Friend. 6.00 John Bush.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT — SIS

2.10 APRIL SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,576: 2m 1f 110yd) (12 runners)

1	5645	MEG'S MEMORY 35 (S) A Streeter 5-12-0	R Garritty	101
2	0103	NICOLA'S PRINCESS 12 (S) H Alexander 5-11-13	R McGrath (3)	97
3	0654	AFRICAN SUN 12 (S) M Chapman 5-11-9	W Worthington	94
4	0-P1	TUDOR FALCON 120 (B,CD,S) P Bradley 5-11-1	D Parker	103
5	F4F0	FATHER EDDIE 14 (V) M Sowersby 4-11-0	A S Smith	96
6	0165	MEMBERS WELCOME 46 (S) W Tinning 5-10-12	Mr S Durack (3)	99
7	F003	OLD GOLD N TAN 10 J R Poulton 5-10-10	Mr Edgar Byrne (7)	87
8	0022	GOLDEN LILY 36 K Burke 5-10-8	R Thornton	112
9	0500	FUNKY 11 F Jordan 5-10-7	D Byrne	84
10	4060	THE TIG 12 R Woodhouse 4-10-6	P Carberry	87
11	5050	ARCHIE-T 28 P Beaumont 5-10-5	B Grattan (5)	81
12	3PP	GUY'S GAMBLE 12 (B) J Wharton 5-10-4	L Cummins (5)	89

3-1 Golden Lily, 9-2 Members Welcome, 7-1 Nicola's Princess, 8-1 Meg's Memory, African Sun, Tudor Falcon, Old Gold N Tan, 16-1 others.

2.40 DAFFODIL HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,164: 2m 5f 110yd) (11)

1	44?P	SHARP COMMAND 21F (D,F) P Eccles 5-12-0	M Dunne (5)	106
2	013P	DAWN MISSION 12 (B,CD,F,G,S) T Easterby 6-11-12	R Garritty	108
3	2134	CARACOL 32 (BF,G,S) J Neville 9-11-6	T Dascombe	112
4	0321	CINNAMON STICK 28 (G) M Sowersby 5-11-3	A S Smith	106
5	0202	MEMSAHIB OFESTEEM 12 (G) S Gollings 7-11-2	D Gallagher	103
6	5400	BE BRAVE 12 (B,S) T Etherington 8-10-8	L Cummins (5)	104
7	0633	THIRTY BELOW 12 (F) M Chapman 9-10-7	W Worthington	105
8	P63P	MARCHWOOD 25 (G,S) N Chamberlain 11-10-6	S Taylor (3)	101
9	1330	CAMBO 38 (CD,F,G,S) M Banks 12-10-5	R Hobson (7)	100
10	4-P5	SOLOMAN SPRINGS 277 (F) Mrs V Ward 8-10-3	P Carberry	97
11	-406	EFAAD 5 J Norton 7-10-0	B Grattan (5)	86

7-2 Caracol, 5-1 Sharp Command, 11-2 Cinnamon Stick, 6-1 Dawn Mission, 7-1 Memsahib Ofesteem, Thirty Below, Cambo, 14-1 others.

3.10 UK HYGIENE FOR WASHROOM EQUIPMENT NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£3,413: 2m 1f 110yd) (8)

1	U5F2	PRIMITIVE STREAK 23 (S) R Hodges 7-11-10	T Dascombe	112
2	2526	SIX CLERKS 11 (S) J FitzGerald 5-11-10	P Carberry	103
3	64U5	NEWTON MIST 28 Mrs S Smith 7-11-1	G F Ryan (5)	104
4	0P24	WILLIE WANNABE 12 M Chapman 8-11-1	W Worthington	107
5	F026	HYA PRIM 12 N Chamberlain 7-10-8	S Taylor (3)	100
6	04-U	BRIDLINGTON BAY 22 (B) M Sowersby 5-10-8	M H Naughton (5)	—
7	40U4	RELKANDER 35 (B) Mrs J Pitman 8-10-5	D Leahy	100
8	-005	PEDLAR'S CROSS 116 G McCourt 6-10-3	E Husband (3)	101

5-4 Primitive Streak, 3-1 Six Clerks, 7-1 Willie Wannabe, Relkander, 10-1 Newton Mist, 12-1 Hya Prim, 25-1 Bridlington Bay, 33-1 Pedlar's Cross

3.45 UK HYGIENE FOR SMOKE FILTRATION NOVICES CHASE (£4,261: 2m 4f) (4)

1	-F15	BOARDROOM SHUFFLE 98 (D,S) J Gifford 7-11-12	O Burrows (5)	132
2	0084	KENALAN LAD 28 (S) Mrs V Ward 8-11-2	P Henley (3)	100
3	0000	MARKET SPRINGER 85 J L Harris 7-11-2	A S Smith	93
4	52F3	SUPER RAPIER 28 G Hubbard 6-11-2	R Thornton	102

1-4 Boardroom Shuffle, 4-1 Super Rapier, 16-1 Kenalan Lad, 25-1 Market Springer

4.20 TULIP HURDLE (£3,316: 2m 3f 110yd) (7)

1	4313	FITZMAURICE 26 (D,S) C Brooks 6-11-6	S McNeill	102
2	2241	SKYCAB 12 (S) J Gifford 6-11-6	O Burrows (5)	119
3	00	C D BOY 128 G McCourt 5-11-0	D J Moffatt	85
4	0P	JEVINGTON 74 I Williams 6-11-0	R Thornton	84
5	2331	DULAS BAY 7F (S) M W Easterby 4-10-13	Mr K R O'Ryan (7)	100
6	1200	SWING WEST 14F (S) P Eccles 4-10-13	D Byrne	101
7	-526	SISTER ROSE 246 S Gollings 7-10-9	D Gallagher	97

5-4 Skycab, 7-2 Dulas Bay, 9-2 Fitzmaurice, 7-1 Swing West, 8-1 Sister Rose, 25-1 C D Boy, 33-1 Jevington.

4.55 SPRING HANDICAP CHASE (£3,277: 2m 4f) (8)

1	040F	FABRICATOR 21 (S) Mrs A Naughton 12-12-0	J Supple	115
2	P41-	CLAVERHOUSE 404 (C,D,G) J FitzGerald 9-11-8	R Thornton	109
3	2054	RUSTIC AIR 112 (C,D,F,G,S) J FitzGerald 11-11-4	R Garritty	111
4	415-	MAESTRO PAUL 415 (G,S) J Gifford 12-11-2	O Burrows (5)	119
5	1P4-	TIM SOLDIER 342 (D,G,S) Miss A Stokell 11-10-12	G Tormey	102
6	21-2	EID 302 (BF,CD,F,G) Mrs S Smith 9-10-3	D Gallagher	104
7	0326	NORTHERN SADDLER 12 (F,G,S) R Hodges 11-10-0	T Dascombe	—
8	0252	KARENASTINO 26 (BF,S) Mrs S Smith 7-10-0	G F Ryan (5)	107

3-1 Northern Saddler, 7-2 Rustic Air, 9-2 Eid, 6-1 Maestro Paul, Karenastino, 7-1 Claverhouse, 12-1 Tim Soldier, 20-1 Fabricator

5.30 SPRING STANDARD NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (Div I: £1,361: 1m 5f 110yd) (14)

1	101	BORA BORA 12 (C,S) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-9	L Suthern (7)	—
2	41	BELISARIO 43 (CD,S) N Graham 4-11-5	R Thornton	—
3		MANNEKEN PIS K Bailey 5-11-4	Mr Edgar Byrne (7)	—
4		MEESON MAJIC D Eddy 5-11-4	Mr L Temple (7)	—
5	0	NOR'S CASH FOR FUN 24 H Collingridge 5-11-4	R Studholme (5)	—
6		POWDER HOUND I Williams 5-11-4	E Husband (3)	—
7		MONTEL'S FRIEND K Bailey 5-10-13	W Walsh (7)	—
8	00	MY DESPERADO 74 C Radcliffe 5-10-13	Mr C R Weaver (7)	—
9		CHADWICK BANK G McCourt 4-10-12	R Hobson (7)	—
10		GENERAL FLIGHT A Turnell 4-10-12	Mr C Rae	—
11	0	MANNA BRAVE 38 A H Harvey 4-10-12	G Brace (7)	—
12		SUPER TSAR (B) K Burke 4-10-12	Mr K R O'Ryan (7)	—
13	0	EMMACAN 49 G Hubbard 4-10-7	C Honour (7)	—
14		LITTLE BUD Miss A M Newton-Smith 4-10-7	M Keighley (7)	—

5-4 Bora Bora, 7-2 Belisario, 5-1 Manneken Pis, 7-1 Montel's Friend, 8-1 others.

6.00 SPRING STANDARD NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (Div II: £1,350: 1m 5f 110yd) (13)

1	01	JOHN BUSH 38 (G) P Eccles 4-11-5	M Dunne (5)	—
2	0	CONSTANT HUSBAND 38 R Cowell 5-11-4	M Keighley (7)	—
3	PR0	PENDLETON 12 P Beaumont 5-11-4	B Grattan (5)	—
4		TRICKY TREVOR K Bailey 5-11-4	Mr Edgar Byrne (7)	—
5	1	DOUBLE CHIMES 33 (F) M Dods 4-11-0	S Taylor (3)	—
6	4	DAMARIS 28 T Barron 6-10-13	L Cummins (5)	—
7	5	LILY FOR LOOKS 74 I Williams 5-10-13	E Husband (3)	—
8	0	LUCKY GANESHA 98 Mrs S Smith 5-10-13	S Ports (7)	—
9	00	GUINEAS GALORE 12 M Chapman 4-10-12	P Henley (3)	—
10	00	MR MAHOLO 12 R Woodhouse 4-10-12	Mr K R O'Ryan (7)	—
11	0	SUPER ROOSTER 30 R Hodges 4-10-12	T Dascombe	—
12		SWEET MEADOW Mrs A Naughton 4-10-12	G Supple (5)	—
13		ACE GUNNER J Neville 4-10-7	R Thornton	—

5-2 John Bush, 3-1 Double Chimes, 7-2 Tricky Trevor, 7-1 Lily For Looks, 10-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: N Graham, 3 winners from 4 runners, 75.0%. C Brooks, 4 from 13, 30.8%. K Bailey, 12 from 42, 28.6%. N Twiston-Davies, 7 from 27, 25.9%. T Easterby, 5 from 21, 23.8%.

JOCKEYS: P Hide, 4 winners from 11 rides, 36.4%. P Carberry, 6 from 27, 22.2%. R Thornton, 7 from 43, 16.3%. S McNeill, 5 from 32, 15.6%. D Byrne, 8 from 57, 14.0%. A S Smith, 18 from 135, 13.3%.

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14/1 Tell The Nipper
16/1 Fine Thyne
16/1 Kamikaze
16/1 St Mellion Fairway
18/1 Samlee
25/1 Celtic Abbey
25/1 Go Ballistic
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25/1 Yorkshire Gale
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RACING

Brooks opts to leave position at Uplands

By Chris McGrath

CHARLIE BROOKS yesterday announced that he will depart Uplands at the end of the season, leaving Suny Bay as the carrot to tempt a successor. However, the reason for the split with Andrew Cohen, his landlord, remains unclear.

In common with many of his Lambourn neighbours, Brooks has struggled with a virus, but he has skilfully nursed the fragile grey to stardom.

Cohen, who accounts for a third of Brooks's string of 60, said: "I understand Charlie wants to pursue other things. I've made significant investment in Uplands, and my plans are undiminished. I want to ensure it is one of the best National Hunt stables in the country and my commitment remains. I have no complaints about Charlie."

While the attractions of the position are obvious, Cohen could hardly be surprised if applicants were to prove wary of the insecurities endured by those to have worked for him previously. He arrived at Uplands after discarding John Upson, and last season removed Graham Bradley from Suny Bay. Restored because of injury to Jamie Osborne, Bradley responded with peerless rides in the Hennessy and the National. With the experienced Yorkshireman as such an effective foil to the dashing young trainer, Cohen has enjoyed the services of an enviable team during the past four years.

What the future holds for Brooks is uncertain. His would be a depressing loss from the training ranks, but he has demonstrated the range of his abilities for *Radio Five Live* and the *Evening Standard*. Brooks, 36, took over Uplands in 1989, having previously been Fred Winter's assistant there. But he found the financial burden intolerable and accepted an offer from Cohen to work as a salaried trainer.


Brooks: departing

The National Hunt season will not go quietly. On Thursday, Richard Guest literally threw his riding licence at the Perth stewards, who had found him guilty of breaching the "non-triers" rule. Guest's quiet style has landed him in similar trouble before, and he considered this the final straw. Yesterday he was adhering to his decision to retire.

His mount, ill suited by the ground, would have struggled to finish closer than he did, whatever his partner's exertions, but Guest did not help his cause by declining at least to go through the motions. "I can't ride differently," he said. "I put the horse's welfare first, and they are putting me in an impossible position."

Another retirement that could have been happier is that of Sleepytime, last year's 1,000 Guineas winner who disappointed on her reappearance at Newmarket last week.

Tea Box has winning blend

Point-to-point
By Carl Evans

WATERLOGGING has cut holes in the weekend's action, and rain jeopardises what is left. Perversely, the courses at Balcormo Mains and Flagg Moor, Britain's northernmost and highest point-to-point tracks respectively, have avoided the worst downpours and should stage racing.

The Fife holds its annual fixture at the Scottish track, where Andrew Parker renews an old association with trainer Kevin Anderson to partner The Pharside in the intermediate. Tea Box could take some stopping in the ladies' race.

Trainer-rider Richard Ford believes the ground is perfect for today's **Holcombe** meeting — his wife, Carrie, should land the ladies' race on Melnik — and Larkhill drains like a sieve, which is comforting for the **South & West Wilts** meeting. Avril Showers would be an apt winner of the men's race there and, with Double Thriller an absentee, Robert Atkinson's mare will be hard to beat.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: Atherstone (postponed to May 9); Berkeley (postponed, May 4); Fife at Balcormo Mains, 3m N of Leven (first race 2.00); Llangeinor (postponed); S & W Wilts at Larkhill, 4m N of Amesbury (2.00); Teme Valley at Brampton Bryan (inspection 7.30am), 11m W of Ludlow (2.00); Tiverton Stag (abandoned); Vale Of Aylesbury at Kimble, 5m S of Aylesbury (2.00); York & Ainsty (abandoned). TOMORROW: Axe Vale (postponed); Cotswold Vale at Maisemore (inspection 10am today), 3m NW of Gloucester (2.00); E Sussex & Romney at Bexhill, N of town (2.00); Grove & Rufford at Southwell (racecourse) (2.00); Haydon (postponed, May 31); High Peak at Flagg Moor, 6m SE of Buxton (2.00); W Norfolk at Fakenham racecourse (2.00).

WORCESTER

THUNDERER
4.50 Larkshill. 5.20 Loveyoumillions. 5.50 Avanti Express. 6.20 Sounds Fyne. 6.50 Kinnescash. 7.20 Varykinov. 7.50 Hi Marble.

Carl Evans: 7.20 Rocket Radar.

GOING: SOFT — SIS

4.50 POWICK NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(Div I: £2,128: 3m) (11 runners)

1 4452 CENTO 7 (B) Mrs S Williams 5-11-10 — B Fenton
2 05UR LARKSHILL 12 J FitzGerald 7-11-4 — F Leahy (3)
3 2416 WHAT JIM WANTS 37 (S) J J O'Neill 5-11-0 — Mr D Jewett (7)
4 5F5P HIGHLAND JACK 50 (D,G) A Turnell 8-10-10 — R Farrant
5 P5P0 JILL 7 S Brookshaw 7-10-3 — X Aizpuru (3)
6 012P MISTER GENEROSITY 10 (S) C Weedon 7-10-2 — M Richards
7 53-F THE OTHER MAN 164 Miss L Siddall 8-10-1 — T Siddall (7)
8 5556 WHERE'S MIRANDA 11 G McCourt 6-10-0 — W Marston
9 8065 PETROS GEM 23 M Bolton 5-10-0 — M Batchelor (5)
10 PF2P GOLDEN FILM 10 (D) B Llewellyn 10-10-0 — S Wynne
11 -PFP DAWN INVADER 12 (S) D Caro 7-10-0 — J R Kavanagh

7-2 Cento, 9-2 What Jim Wants, 5-1 Mister Generosity, 6-1 Highland Jack, 7-1 Jill, Where's Miranda, 8-1 Larkshill, 12-1 others.

5.20 HENWICK NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,775: 2m) (14)

1 0-1 LOVEYOUMILLIONS 30 (D,F) M Pipe 6-11-5 — A P McCoy
2 0P00 BARTON GREEN 12 S Brookshaw 7-10-12 — S Wynne
3 0600 BUCK BOARD 78 R Brazington 8-10-12 — B Fenton
4 P20- COUNCILLOR 438 Miss A Broyd 7-10-12 — Mr S Durack (3)
5 5500 ERIN ALLEY 26 P R Webber 5-10-12 — J A McCarthy
6 PP03 KALADROSS 11 W Jenks 7-10-12 — Gary Lyons
7 P NAILS TAILS 9 E Wheeler 5-10-12 — C Webb (3)
8 4- STRETCHING 348F Mrs L Williamson 5-10-12 — R Bellamy
9 0-P SWEET PERRY 98 Miss C Dyson 7-10-12 — G Hogan
10 6-0P TONGUE-IN-CHEEK 29 D French Davis 7-10-12 — J Magee (3)
11 000P ALBERTINA 46 E L James 6-10-7 — J R Kavanagh
12 P4-F FAIRIES FAREWELL 44 Miss E England 8-10-7 — D Painter (7)
13 0 LINDAS VENTURE 31 A Carroll 5-10-7 — J Culloty
14 4 WHO TELLS JAN 210 Miss P Whittle 5-10-7 — W Marston

1-3 Loveyoumillions, 7-1 Barton Green, 8-1 Kaladross, 20-1 Councillor, 25-1 Stretching, Sweet Perry, Who Tells Jan, 33-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

SEDGEFIELD: Trainers: Mrs M Reveley, 66 winners from 229 runners, 28.8%; J FitzGerald, 11 from 43, 25.6%; J Jefferson, 9 from 36, 25.0%; I Park, 7 from 28, 25.0%; C Thornton, 5 from 20, 25.0%; F Murphy, 5 from 26, 19.2%. Jockeys: P Niven, 49 winners from 162 rides, 30.2%; G Lee, 16 from 66, 24.2%; P Carberry, 9 from 49, 18.4%; J Supple, 12 from 69, 17.4%; N Smith, 14 from 90, 15.6%; E Callaghan, 10 from 66, 15.2%.

WOLVERHAMPTON: Trainers: J Gosden, 6 winners from 22 runners, 27.3%; M Johnston, 58 from 263, 22.1%; C Cyzer, 7 from 39, 17.9%; R Williams, 3 from 17, 17.6%; J Pearce, 14 from 82, 17.1%; J Berry, 47 from 317, 14.8%. Jockeys: A Bond, 5 winners from 17 rides, 29.4%; J Weaver, 65 from 299, 21.7%; D Holland, 33 from 155, 21.3%; D Sweeney, 14 from 89, 15.7%; Dane O'Neill, 12 from 80, 15.0%; C Lowther, 14 from 94, 14.9%.

WORCESTER: Trainers: M Pipe, 42 winners from 127 runners, 33.1%; C Weedon, 4 from 17, 23.5%; P Nicholls, 11 from 48, 22.9%; J J O'Neill, 3 from 14, 21.4%; C Brooks, 6 from 31, 19.4%; P Hobbs, 19 from 106, 17.9%. Jockeys: A P McCoy, 49 winners from 171 rides, 28.7%; T J Murphy, 8 from 42, 19.0%; C Llewellyn, 22 from 124, 17.7%; N Williamson, 19 from 112, 17.0%; R Dunwoody, 29 from 173, 16.8%; G Bradley, 6 from 45, 13.3%.

5.50 CITY OF WORCESTER NOVICES CHASE
(£2,975: 2m) (5)

1 2131 AVANTI EXPRESS 12 (B,G,S) C Egerton 6-12-0 — N Williamson
2 40U6 ALTHREY PILOT 17 R Peacock 7-11-0 — S Wynne
3 421R BARHALE BOY 40 (D,S) T Casey 6-11-0 — M A Fitzgerald
4 UP03 JOE'S BIRTHDAY 30 P R Webber 8-11-0 — B Fenton
5 60-P SIDNEY 51 Miss E England 9-11-0 — E Byrne

1-5 Avanti Express, 13-2 Barhale Boy, 10-1 Joe's Birthday, 33-1 Althrey Pilot, Sidney.

6.20 TIMOTHY LEA ESTATE AGENTS HANDICAP CHASE (£5,500: 2m 7f 110yd) (11)

1 413P EASY BUCK 23 (F,G,S) C Morlock 11-12-0 — A Thornton
2 2-4P OBAN 37 (G,S) Miss H Knight 8-11-8 — G Bradley
3 P1P1 PARSONS BOY 7 (G,S) G Richards 9-11-6 — A Dobbin
4 PRPU GREENHIL TARE AWAY 21 (D,F,G,S) P Hobbs 10-11-5 — R Dunwoody
5 2303 WITH IMPUNITY 23 (G,S) P Nicholls 9-11-3 — T J Murphy
6 2402 NAIYSARI 12 (G,S) P Rich 10-10-10 — A P McCoy
7 2241 THE GOPHER 167 (F,G,S) D Wintle 9-10-10 — W Marston
8 6081 COVERDALE LANE 12 (G,S) Mrs S Smith 11-10-5 — R Wilkinson (5)
9 1F61 SOUNDS FYNE 14 (G,S) J FitzGerald 9-10-5 — M A Fitzgerald
10 4161 FLAPJACK LAD 12 (F,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 9-10-0 — C Llewellyn
11 FP12 LOTTERY TICKET 12 (G,S) T George 9-10-0 — S Wynne

7-2 Sounds Fyne, 6-1 With Impunity, 7-1 Parsons Boy, Naiysari, Flapjack Lad, 8-1 The Gopher, Coverdale Lane, 12-1 others.

6.50 RON SIMS HEATING & ELECTRICAL HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,057: 2m) (5)

1 125P KINNESCASH 168 (CD,F,G,S) P Bowen 5-12-0 — W Marston
2 2380 NOBLE LORD 75 (D,F,G) R Phillips 5-11-1 — A P McCoy
3 1300 RANGER SLOANE 37 (D,G,S) G Fierro 6-10-4 — R Farrant
4 3582 SAMAND 12 (D,F,G) Miss L Siddall 6-10-4 — R Dunwoody
5 0046 ISLAND VISION 84 (D,F) J O'Shea 8-10-0 — V Slattery

2-1 Samand, 5-2 Kinnescash, 3-1 Ranger Sloane, 5-1 Noble Lord, 10-1 Island Vision.

7.20 UPTON UPON SEVERN NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE (Amateurs: £1,022: 2m 7f 110yd) (10)

1 F/FP AMBROSE 14P (F,G,S) Mrs T Ritson 11-12-0 — Mr W Ritson (7)
2 1FF- BUSHTON 336P (F) J L Brown 6-12-0 — Mr D S Jones (7)
3 0480 CANISTER CASTLE 7P (F) J E Price 10-12-0 — Mr A Wintle (7)
4 P5F5 DUKES MEADOW 38 (S) A Varey 8-12-0 — Mr S Stronge (7)
5 /U4P GIORDANO 11 (S) A Dealan 8-12-0 — Mr F Hassby (7)
6 4/F4 MOORLAND HIGHFLYER 23 (S) A Hobbs 7-12-0 — Mr S Durack (3)
7 1-22 ROCKET RADAR 62P (S) Miss J Bann 7-12-0 — Mr J M Pritchard (7)
8 1U32 RUSTY FELLOW 17 (F) R Shail 8-12-8 — Mr D Mansell (7)
9 -311 VARYKINOV 27P (B,S) Mark G Rimell 9-12-0 — Mr M Rimell (5)
10 P3RP WHO'S YOUR MAN 11P (F) Mrs N Sharpe 8-12-0 — Mr P Hanser (7)

6-4 Varykinov, 4-1 Moorland Highflyer, 9-2 Rocket Radar, 11-2 Rusty Fellow, 12-1 Dukes Meadow, 14-1 Giordano, 20-1 Who's Your Man, 25-1 others.

7.50 POWICK NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(Div II: £2,110: 3m) (11)

1 -4FP CHINA GEM 28 (B,BF) C Brooks 7-11-10 — G Bradley
2 345 TAPPETO 21 (BF) P R Webber 6-11-6 — J A McCarthy
3 0024 LATCHFORD 7 I Williams 6-11-1 — A P McCoy
4 3P10 PALACE PARADE 44 (G) A Hobbs 8-10-10 — A Thornton
5 P452 SEPTEMBER BREEZE 12 J O'Shea 7-10-5 — M A Fitzgerald
6 3215 QUIET MOMENTS 21 (V,F) P Murphy 5-10-5 — J Goldstein (5)
7 0035 HI MARBLE 44 (CD,G,S) Mrs M Jones 7-10-3 — N Williamson
8 -5PF SEVEN POTATO MORE 14 Sir J Barlow Bt 8-10-0 — G Hogan
9 660P SAFE TO ASSUME 89 R Brazington 7-10-0 — B Fenton
10 F00 HUSTLE AN BUSTLE 21 G Fierro 4-10-0 — R Farrant
11 P00 YOUNG ARDROSS 137 C Weedon 7-10-0 — M Richards

7-2 September Breeze, 9-2 Latchford, 5-1 Tappeto, 11-2 Quiet Moments, 6-1 China Gem, 13-2 Hi Marble, 8-1 Palace Parade, 10-1 others.

SEDGEFIELD

THUNDERER
5.40 Kathryn's Pet. 6.10 Tam O'Shanter. 6.40 Noosa Sound. 7.10 Harfdecent. 7.40 Nasayer. 8.10 Hurst Flyer.

GOING: SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) — SIS

5.40 MITSUBISHI TELEVISION CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS NOVICES HURDLE (£2,530: 2m 1f) (9 runners)

1 261 KATHRYN'S PET 17F (G) Mrs M Reveley 5-11-2 — G Lee
2 00 ASHLEY COTTAGE 67 J A Moore 6-11-0 — A K Smith (5)
3 P-00 BALLYKISSANGEL 36F N Bycroft 5-11-0 — R McGrath
4 0006 BIROTEX BOY 35 C Grant 5-11-0 — E Callaghan
5 42 ZAIN DANCER 22 M Hammond 6-11-0 — N Horrocks
6 0424 DREAMDONNA 12 (B) P Beaumont 8-10-9 — W Dowling
7 3-24 PERPETUAL LIGHT 18F (BF) J J Quinn 5-10-9 — B Harding
8 355 PHEASANTS DELIGHT 19 Mrs M Reveley 5-10-9 — M Herrington (5)
9 0P NIGHT EXPRESS 78 M Todhunter 4-10-8 — I Jardine (3)

11-10 Kathryn's Pet, 7-2 Zain Dancer, 13-2 Perpetual Light, 7-1 Pheasants Delight, 15-1 Dreamdonna, 25-1 Birotex Boy, 25-1 Ashley Cottage, Ballykissangel, 33-1 Night Express.

6.10 STANLEY RACING NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£4,034: 2m 5f 110yd) (10)

1 6153 NORTHERN MAESTRO 12 (C,G) Mrs M Reveley 4-11-10 — P Niven
2 332P BOYZONTOOWA 66 (BF,F) W Storey 6-11-5 — M Moloney
3 4312 WATER FONT 26 (F) J J O'Neill 6-11-4 — R McGrath (3)
4 F22 TAM O'SHANTER 12 C Thornton 4-11-4 — M Foster
5 563 MR WALT 11 J Jefferson 5-11-1 — E Callaghan
6 00-6 JOE LUKE 67 D M Moore 6-10-13 — J Callaghan
7 -0C2 HUNTING SLANE 12 C Grant 6-10-10 — P Carberry
8 -5P5 ORCHARD KING 180 J Wharton 8-10-9 — K Johnson
9 000P CLERICAL COUSIN 28 L Lungo 9-10-6 — R Supple
10 0540 DISTINCT 14 A Whillans 5-10-5 — B Harding

7-2 Hunting Slane, 9-2 Water Font, 5-1 Northern Maestro, 11-2 Tam O'Shanter, 7-1 Mr Walt, 8-1 Boyzontoowa, 10-1 Orchard King, 14-1 others.

6.40 BUPA HOSPITAL WASHINGTON NOVICES CHASE (£3,693: 3m 3f) (8)

1 1351 NOOSA SOUND 11 (CD,G) L Lungo 8-11-12 — R Supple
2 U16F APACHE RAIDER 12 (B,BF,G) F Murphy 6-11-8 — P Carberry
3 4015 GALEN 35 (CD,G) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-8 — P Niven
4 2PP6 THE ENERGISER 130 (CD,F) D Lamb 12-11-8 — J Burke
5 P-FP AR AGHAIDH ABHAILE 12 Miss K Milligan 7-11-2 — D Parker
6 4044 FENLOE RAMBLER 14 R Johnson 7-11-2 — K Johnson
7 -F33 KINGS LANE 19 (D,F,G) J Dun 9-11-2 — B Storey
8 006F MEADOWBURN 14 (F) W Reed 8-10-11 — T Reed

5-2 Apache Raider, 11-4 Noosa Sound, 9-2 Kings Lane, 5-1 Galen, 8-1 The Energiser, Fenloe Rambler, 33-1 Ar Aghaidh Abhaile, Meadowburn.

7.10 MARCUS GEORGE COLIN MCLANEY NAMING DAY HANDICAP CHASE (£4,328: 2m 5f) (7)

1 1442 TOUGH TEST 29 (F,G,S) Mrs J Goodfellow 8-11-10 — A S Smith
2 2F44 BURNT IMP 14 (D,F,G,S) G M Moore 8-11-8 — J Callaghan
3 1-P1 SPERRIN VIEW 28 (F,G,S) Mrs H Mobley 12-11-8 — B Harding
4 5311 HARFDECENT 22 (CD,F,S) Mrs M Reveley 7-10-12 — P Niven
5 2U21 STAGE FRIGHT 12 (B,S) F Murphy 7-10-1 — P Carberry
6 304F BLAZING DAWN 54 (C,F,S) J Hubbuck 11-10-0 — B Storey
7 0525 MARLINGFORD 12 (F,S) Mrs J Jordan 11-10-0 — R McGrath (3)

6-4 Harfdecent, 3-1 Tough Test, 4-1 Sperrin View, 7-1 Stage Fright, 8-1 others.

7.40 MITSUBISHI TELEVISION AND VIDEO MAIDEN HURDLE (£2,108: 2m 5f 110yd) (11)

1 4220 CYPRESS AVENUE 28 Mrs V Ward 6-11-7 — P Carberry
2 PP0P MARCUS ROYALE 46 (B) D Lamb 11-11-7 — J Burke
3 0203 MR TEES COMPONENTS 35 Mrs M Reveley 6-11-7 — P Niven
4 0-42 NASAYER 120 H Mason 8-11-7 — R Garritty
5 0-40 RINUS MAJOR 28 M Todhunter 7-11-7 — M Moloney
6 P/0/ TANGO IN PARIS 880 (B) Mrs E Moscrop 8-11-7 — K Johnson
7 4023 THE MICKLETONIAN 12 C Grant 7-11-7 — R Supple
8 -022 THE SNOW BURN 14 (BF) T Tate 5-11-7 — J Callaghan
9 PPP ALLMERE 26 I Park 7-11-2 — N Smith
10 6 LET'S HANG ON 12 J Turner 5-11-2 — J Supple
11 00 HAJAMAT 26 W McKeown 4-11-0 — Mr G Lake (7)

2-1 The Snow Burn, 4-1 Mr Tees Components, 9-2 The Mickletonian, 8-1 others.

8.10 STANLEY RACING MARES ONLY HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,425: 2m 5f 110yd) (4)

1 2110 JESSICA ONE 42 (G) Mrs M Reveley 7-12-0 — M H Naughton (5)
2 5P12 ORANGE IMP 12 (G) J FitzGerald 5-11-6 — P Carberry
3 12P3 HURST FLYER 14 (F,S) F Murtagh 6-11-4 — B Harding
4 323R AIDE MEMOIRE 26 (S) R Johnson 9-10-0 — K Johnson

11-8 Orange Imp, 13-8 Jessica One, 7-2 Hurst Flyer, 14-1 Aide Memoire.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Market Rasen: 2.10 Father Eddie, Guy's Gamble, 3.10 Bridlington Bay, Relkander. 5.30 Super Tsar. Sandown Park: 3.30 Carole's Crusader, Samlee. Sedgefield: 7.40 Marcus Royale. Wolverhampton: 7.00 Across The Water, 7.30 Ludere, 9.00 Borehill Joker. Worcester: 7.50 China Gem.

WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER
7.00 Redbridge. 7.30 Bongo. 8.00 Sipowitz. 8.30 Leigh Crofter. 9.00 Blazing Flame. 9.30 Marjorie Rose.

GOING: STANDARD — DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE — SIS

7.00 SKY DIVE MAIDEN STAKES
(£3,688: 1m 4f) (8 runners)

1 THE BAT 43J A Jarvis 6-9-13 — D Sweeney (3) 7
2 0 BOBBY SWIFT 16 P Howling 4-9-12 — Dane O'Neill 1
3 3- REDBRIDGE 372 J Gosden 4-9-12 — G Hind 2
4 MAZZELMO 23J A Bailey 5-9-8 — A Bond (7) 1
5 6 WHAT THE DEVIL 7 J Smith 5-9-8 — C Teague (3) 4
6 560- ACROSS THE WATER 305 (B) C Cyzer 4-9-7 — J Weaver 8
7 NORIAN T Bill 3-8-7 — N Carlisle 5
8 22 SPRING ANCHOR 18 (BF) P Cole 3-8-7 — C Rutter 6

4-6 Spring Anchor, 6-4 Redbridge, 25-1 The Bat, What The Devil, 33-1 Bobby Swift, Mazzelmo, Across The Water, 50-1 Norian.

7.30 RED DEVIL APPRENTICE CLAIMING STAKES
(£1,725: 1m 100yd) (13)

1 2101 BONGO 14 (CD) P Evans 4-10-0 — A McCarthy (3) 11
2 -056 BENTICO 36 (V,BF,CD,F,G) Mrs N Macauley 9-9-12 — K Moore (7) 10
3 BRAWE 23J P Farrell 5-9-12 — A Daly 4
4 3226 CHEERFUL GROOM 63 (F) D Shaw 7-9-8 — R Winston (3) 13
5 64/0 EXCLUSION 75J (D,F,S) J Hetherton 9-9-6 — T Siddall (5) 9
6 00-6 SUPER PARK 60 (S) J Pearce 6-9-4 — Deborah Carmody (7) 8
7 000- JOYFUL JOY 167J B Baugh 4-9-1 — P Roberts 7
8 5503 OVER THE MOON 7 N Littmoden 4-9-1 — C Lowther 2
9 50-0 FAIRLY SURE 28 (D,F) N Berry 5-8-13 — S Righton (5) 1
10 500- RISKY LOVER 67J T Bill 5-8-11 — P Goode (7) 12
11 40 ROUGE 18 J Leigh 3-8-9 — D Sweeney 3
12 0640 LANDRFUN 25 H Collingridge 3-8-8 — P Doe (5) 6
13 5340 LUDERE 24 (B) J Hetherton 3-8-4 — C Teague 5

7-4 Bentico, 5-2 Bongo, 8-1 Over The Moon, Rouge, 10-1 Landrfun, 14-1 Cheerful Groom, 16-1 Ludere, 20-1 others.

8.00 FREE FALL HANDICAP
(£3,590: 1m 6f 166yd) (6)

1 1101 NOUFARI 14 (CD,G) R Hollinshead 7-10-0 — A McCarthy (5) 4
2 /214 JARAAB 14 (V,CD) Miss S Wilton 7-9-9 — S Whitworth 2
3 00-5 STAR RAGE 14 (C,D,F,G) M Johnston 8-9-8 — D Holland 1
4 -024 PREMIER DANCE 91 (CD,F) D Haydn Jones 11-8-11 — A Mackay 3
5 110- SIPOWITZ 166 (BF,CD,F,S) C Cyzer 4-8-1 — T Williams 6
6 00-0 OUR DROWSY MAGGIE 113 T Wall 4-7-10 — N Adams 5

11-8 Noufari, 7-2 Jaraab, 4-1 Star Rage, 9-2 Sipowitz, 10-1 Premier Dance, 66-1 Our Drowsy Maggie.

8.30 GO RED HANDICAP (£2,070: 7f) (12)

1 -510 SHADES OF LOVE 19 (D) V Soane 4-10-0 — C Rutter 3
2 3531 MIKE'S DOUBLE 14 (CD) Mrs N Macauley 4-9-10 — P McCabe (3) 12
3 0030 THE WYANDOTTE INN 4 (C,D) R Hodges 4-9-10 — Amanda Sanders 7
4 000- TAL-Y-LLYN 192 (D,S) N Berry 4-9-9 — R Carlisle 8
5 60/0 HIL RHAPSODY 5 (S) B Palling 4-9-8 — T Sprake 2
6 -242 CAUDILLO 18 (CD,S) Mrs P Dutfield 5-9-7 — J Quinn 1
7 3450 DENBRAE 23 (D,F,G) D Murray Smith 6-9-5 — C Lowther (3) 4
8 0-02 SIS GARDEN 14 (CD,F,S) J Cullinan 5-9-6 — R Mullen (5) 10
9 2543 LEIGH CROFTER 4 (B,CD,F,G,S) J A Harris 9-9-5 — T G McLaughlin 5
10 0025 U-NO-HARRY 7 (D,F) R Hollinshead 5-9-5 — A McCarthy (5) 6
11 05-0 DAYLIGHT DREAMS 5 (S) C Cyzer 4-9-3 — J Weaver 11
12 3500 CASTLE ASHBY JACK 26 (D) P Howling 4-9-2 — S Whitworth 9

4-1 Mike's Double, 11-2 Shades Of Love, 6-1 Sis Garden, 7-1 Caudillo, 8-1 Leigh Crofter, 10-1 The Wyandotte Inn, Castle Ashby Jack, 11-1 others.

9.00 REGIMENT SELLING STAKES
(2-Y-O: £1,848: 5f) (5)

1 BLAZING FLAME N Littmoden 8-11 — J Weaver 1
2 25 BOREHILL JOKER 4 (B) W G M Turner 8-11 — T Sprake 3
3 TO THE LAST MAN M Usher 8-11 — R Street 2
4 3 WELSH ASSEMBLY 7 G Enright 8-11 — A McCarthy (5) 5
5 4 RED SYMPHONY 14 (BF) J Berry 8-6 — P Fessey (3) 4

1-2 Red Symphony, 6-1 Borehill Joker, 7-1 Blazing Flame, 8-1 Welsh Assembly, 14-1 To The Last Man.

9.30 PARACHUTE FILLIES HANDICAP
(£2,070: 5f) (8)

1 026- MARJORIE ROSE 253 (CD,G) A Bailey 5-10-0 — D Wright 3
2 50-0 PIZZICATO 7 (CD,F) R Williams 4-9-12 — D Griffiths (3) 2
3 0-20 ELLENBROOK 49 (B,C,D,G,S) J Berry 3-9-11 — P Fessey (3) 6
4 4205 RIVER ENSIGN 7 (G) W Brisbourne 5-8-12 — R Mullen (5) 7
5 -560 SUNSET HARBOUR 18 (D,F,G) S Kettlewell 5-8-7 — J Fortune 1
6 -000 RUNS IN THE FAMILY 5 (B,D,G,S) G McCourt 6-8-5 — D Harrison 4
7 -403 MARINO STREET 54 (D,G) P Evans 5-8-0 — A McCarthy (5) 5
8 006- GINNIESHOPE 241 S Knight 3-7-13 — P Doe (5) 8

5-2 Ellenbrook, 3-1 River Ensign, 6-1 Marjorie Rose, Pizzicato, 7-1 Marino Street, 8-1 Sunset Harbour, 10-1 Runs In The Family, 25-1 Ginnieshope.

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97P Audi 2.0E Convertible. Cactus Green, ecru leather s/seats, Black hood, abs, pas, sports airbag, e/w x4, h/seats, e/d/mirrors, edm, cdl, 10cd, audi immobiliser, 10 spoke alloy wheels, 3,760mls 23,995
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96P Audi A6 Estate 2.6 SE, 22,000 miles, Black, Walnut, Driver Information
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96N Audi S2 Coupe, Ragusa Green, 15K, Leather, 1 Owner, FSH
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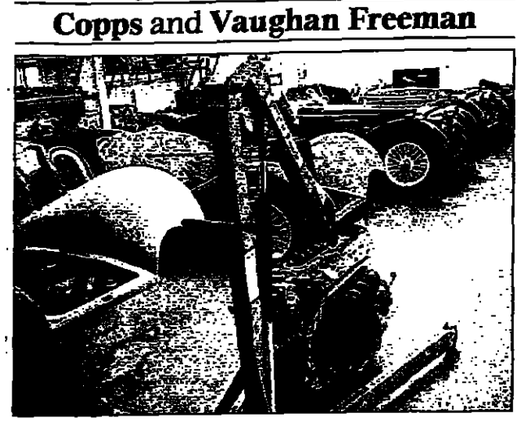
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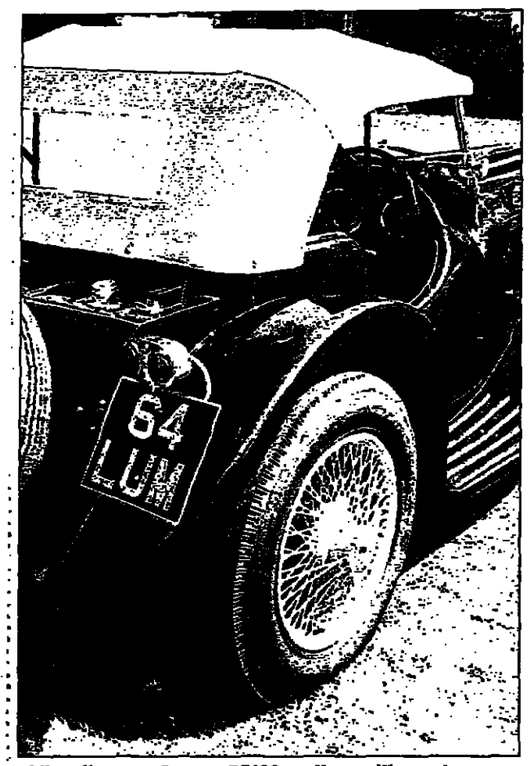
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New law fixes backyard bodgers

Britain's busy DIY carmakers face new regulations to put an end to cowboy deathtraps, report Alan Copps and Vaughan Freeman





Visually exact Jaguar SS100 replicas will now have to be changed to meet safety rules protecting pedestrians

Building your own car in the back yard is the dream of many an enthusiast, a labour of love that provides the basis for a small but important part of the British motor industry. Great names like Lotus can trace their origins to such humble ambitions.

While all the major manufacturers are now foreign-owned there are still about 100 small companies — often in the most unlikely parts of Britain — who turn out anything from a few to several hundred cars a year either as complete vehicles or in kit form. About half their total production goes for export.

The products range from rudimentary specials, maintaining the backyard tradition so often based upon the old Austin Seven, to astonishingly sophisticated engineering exercises, some in the guise of classic replicas, others rivalling in shape if not always in performance the current crop of supercars.

Until very recently all you needed to put one of these vehicles on the road was an MoT certificate. But from May 1 each one, together with personally imported vehicles, will face a much more stringent test, Single Vehicle Approval. The idea is to ensure that such cars meet British and European technical, safety and environmental standards without having to go through the "type approval" process that mass-production cars face, with its hugely expensive crash-testing and other procedures.

It is a rare piece of European-inspired legislation that, apart from its cost of £165 per car, has been generally welcomed. Peter Bailey, the chairman of the Association of Specialist Car Manfacturers, and whose Dorset firm, Chesil Speedsters, offers a VW-based Porsche 356, says: "Nowhere else in the world are there so many specialist carmakers. The association represents about a dozen, including some of the biggest, such as Caterham, Quantam and Marlin; there are another 30 or 40 who might make 20 cars a year each and about a hundred altogether, although some may make only two or three cars a year.

"SVA will do the industry an enormous amount of good. It means that for the first time somebody walking into a specialist car exhibition will know that if they see a car they like, they can buy it and build it or have it built for them knowing it will pass the comprehensive SVA safety test.

"No manufacturer will be able to supply a car either made up, or ready-to-assemble, if it cannot pass SVA. So customers do not any longer have to worry about how safe the car is. If someone comes down to see my cars they may say 'Chesil who?'. Now I can show them the paperwork to prove we've passed the test.

"For the cowboys in the industry, it is the end of putting together any old chassis and body, and selling it to customers who assemble it using any old bits and pieces."

It is not without drawbacks though, notably for firms like Suffolk Sportscars, which produces an exact replica of the 1930s SS100 Jaguar, complete with gigantic headlamps, louvred bonnet and fold-down windscreen.

Roger Williams, owner of Suffolk Sportscars, says: "Our car is a perfect visual replica. To get it to pass SVA, we have to do a lot of modifications." Those include subtle repositioning of the headlamps, and changes to the bonnet catches and wheel spinners to meet regulations outlawing sharp edges at the front for the protection of pedestrians. (The same rules mean that the Spirit of Ecstasy mascot on a modern Rolls-Royce has to retract into the radiator on impact.) Such changes may be small beer to a Ford or a Vauxhall, but a considerable drain on the financial and engineering resources of a small firm.

> 'People do bizarre things with kits they buy'

Williams says: "I accept that the safety regulations are a good thing, but it seems a pity to me that the originality of the car, in terms of its visual appeal, will be lost somewhat." On the other hand he is confident that once his car has got SVA certification, the door should open to exports worldwide.

Another concern is that waiting lists may build up as Vehicle Inspectorate staff try to cope with the new workload. Terry Matthews at Marlin Cars says: "I don't think they have thought it through. They wanted to shake up the specialist car industry and that is no bad thing. There are cars in this industry that should not exist.

"We will have to book our cars in for their SVA checks six to eight weeks in advance, which is difficult when you are building cars by hand and cannot say to the day when they will be completed."

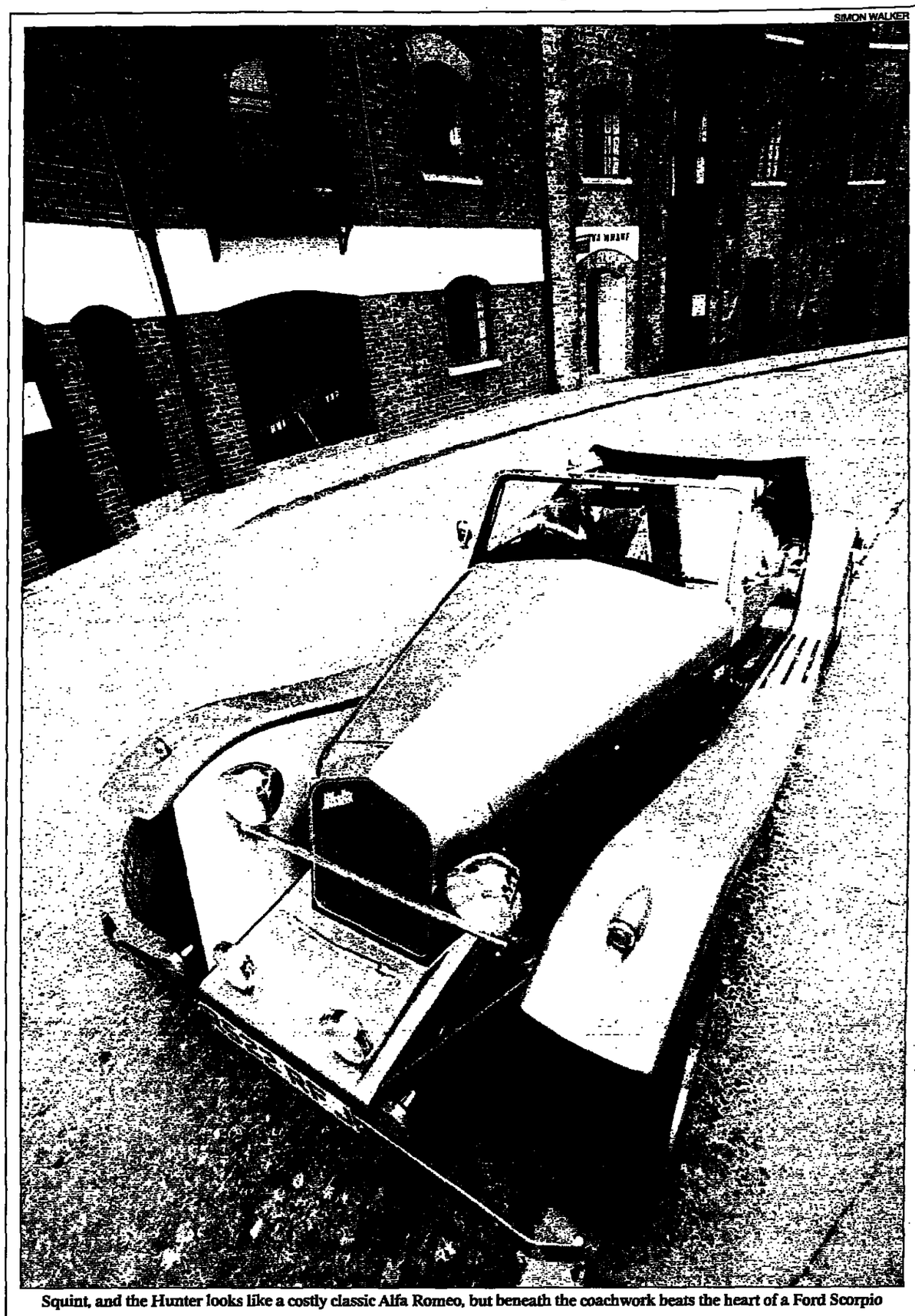
The SVA checks include the collapsibility of the steering column, exhaust emissions, the design weight, the suitability and effectiveness of the car's brakes given its engine power, the position of lights and mirrors, chassis structure and seatbelt strength.

Ian Hyne, the editor of *Kit Cars International* says: "The general view is that SVA is most welcome. The only regrettable thing is that it does make life difficult for some replica carmakers. However, it will get rid of the cowboys who have been putting together some real death-traps."

It will also, says Mr Hyne, catch those people assembling kits at home with less engineering knowledge than sense: "Manufacturers produce perfectly good kits that some people take home and do bizarre things with, thinking they are being clever, when they are increasing their chances of killing themselves.

"Building a kit car offers numerous possibilities of making a potentially lethal mistake. Building a car is a complex undertaking but the manufacturers are never going to admit that. SVA will ensure specialist cars are safer and better built."

Graham Nearn, the managing director of Caterham Cars, says that if nothing else, the introduction of single-vehicle approval has ensured the industry's survival: "The fear was that European legislation might have been introduced to just sweep away the whole industry. Now we are legitimate, everything has been tidied up, and the recognition of safety in our industry has to be a good thing."



Squint, and the Hunter looks like a costly classic Alfa Romeo, but beneath the coachwork beats the heart of a Ford Scorpio

ROAD TEST

Marlin's classic ride has none of the catches

AT FIRST glance it might just be mistaken for a 1930s Alfa of the kind that fetches £100,000-plus at auction, *writes Alan Copps*. Yet beneath the evocative bodywork of the Marlin Hunter beats the reliable heart of a Ford Scorpio.

The Hunter is a prime example of those quirky products that keep Britain's burgeoning specialist car industry going. I was impressed immediately by its quality. Somehow the expectation with these low-volume cars is of something rather slight and Heath-Robinson. But in this car everything shut with a satisfying clunk, the gearshift was positive and the steering, given the length of that bonnet, accurate.

I drove it for a week and enjoyed myself in fair weather and foul for at least 75 per cent of the time, rather more than the pleasure quotient of an ordinary car. Yet one question kept nagging in my head: "Why?"

My 14-year-old neighbour, a keen assistant road-tester, supplied the answer as we braved a drizzly drive schoolwards: "It feels like the kind of car you might keep in the garage and just take out every now and then because you fancied a drive."

THE WAS right. On a country road in decent weather with the hood down, this car provides "real motoring" in a sense that Mr Toad or a Brooklands devotee might have understood. But because it's not a real vintage motor you don't need a riding mechanic. The Ford engine just plugs away doing exactly what it should and while the 2-litre version's performance is hardly startling, because of the open bodywork it always feels tremendous.

If you want the full works, then go for the top-range version of Marlin's Sportster with a supercharged, all-aluminium, 4-litre V8 Rover engine. This, says Terry Matthews, the company's energetic managing director, "accurately recreates the driving experience of piloting a large-engined prewar racing and speed-record car".

It might be an acquired taste, but with prices starting at just under £20,000, fuel consumption of around 35mpg for the four-cylinder cars and Ford-sized servicing costs, it is easier to live with a Marlin than it is with a real classic. And in a world where most cars are ever more global products, there is an undeniable appeal to something purely British-made by a British company which exudes old-fashioned craftsmanship yet meets modern safety standards.

But if you are chasing a nostalgic experience rather than practical transport there are bound to be compromises. I found the driving position, low down between the deep chassis members, very uncomfortable and I wouldn't like to have travelled long distances in the test car. But if you want a Hunter you get it built to order; it takes three months, you get a photograph album of every stage of construction and you can have your driving position made to measure.

Marlin Cars, Crediton, Devon. 01363 773772

COMPANY CAR DRIVER OF THE YEAR

First tests tie up drivers in Notts

CONES were crushed, tyres tortured and some egos dented. But the first regional heat of *The Times*/Lease Plan Company Car Driver of the Year still proved an enjoyable learning curve — literally — for the members of ten teams who competed in Nottingham last week, *writes Eve-Ann Prentice*.

About 250 company car drivers have entered the competition, which includes a series of on and off-road tests of control skills, and knowledge of the Highway Code. Entrants are also asked to imagine they are the first on the scene of an accident on a country lane at night: what should they do first? Tend the injured, don reflective clothing, call an ambulance, make the road safe, or turn off the engine? Only one person taking part in the Nottingham heat managed to get this section 100 per cent correct.

The winners in Nottingham were Matthew Crossland, who works for Cannon Hygiene based in Morecambe, Lancashire, and Matthew Wright, an advertising rep for Century 106FM, the regional radio station broadcast from Nottingham. Both now go to the finals at Silverstone in June for the chance to win a trophy and a VIP trip for two to the Italian Grand Prix.

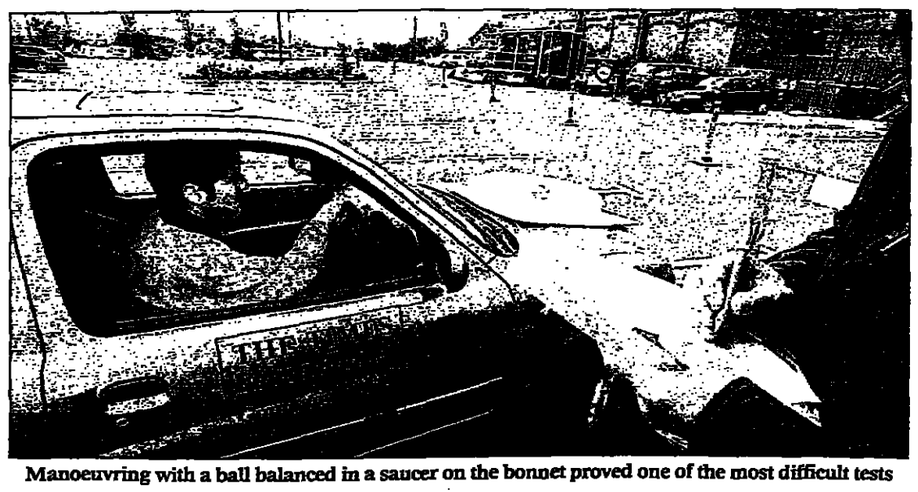
"The most difficult thing for me was the manoeuvrability test, balancing a ball on a saucer on the front of the car while driving round a course against the clock," says Wright. "I am also glad I swotted up a bit on the Highway Code because we were asked some very tricky questions. I have been driving for 18 years and the Highway Code has changed quite a bit since then."

Highway Code amnesia seems to have struck several entrants last week, according to Drive Tech, the driver-training company whose instructors are acting as judges. "Someone did 60mph in a 40mph zone, but overall the standard is not bad," said Garry Hyde, Drive Tech sales director. "It shows up a mile if someone has had some training."

Matthew Crossland, who has covered 90,000 miles in under two years, said he found the on-road section most testing. Many of the competitors in Nottingham said they had always believed they were good drivers, but that the contest showed up weaknesses they had not suspected. "It shows there is more to being a good driver than covering a lot of miles," said one.

Some of the most spectacular cone-scattering came in the cadence-braking section, which simulates an emergency stop on a sharp, wet bend. "The cadence-braking was brilliant," said Wright's team-mate, Giles McMullen. "The written side was quite daunting."

The competition, which was launched by Roads Minister Baroness Hayman, aims to promote safe driving, and the contest is supported by the Department of Transport.



Manoeuvring with a ball balanced in a saucer on the bonnet proved one of the most difficult tests

YOUNG DRIVER WINNER

Richard Whitney, an engineering graduate from Swindon, has no need to dread his next insurance bill. He's certain of a £500 reduction after winning last weekend's Young Driver of the Year competition.

He was judged top driver from a field of 40 aged 17-24 who went to Silverstone to face a rigorous series of tests at the hands of police examiners. It was the third time he had entered the competition organised by the Catherine Kenyon Trust. "I've been involved in two accidents and I wanted to improve my driving. The trust does a great job and I'm sure the competition helps raise the standard of driving," said Richard.

His prize also includes two tickets to this year's British Grand Prix and a year's membership of Green flag roadside assistance. The competition was set up by Ted Kenyon six years ago after his daughter Catherine was killed when her car was swept from the road by a young driver who had been racing a motorcycle.



Richard Whitney: winner

Pc Stuart Mitchell, of the Thames Valley police who help organise the contest, said: "Those who enter tend to be keen drivers, so to some extent we're preaching to the converted. But I hope it might stop some becoming my customers as an accident investigation officer."

Each finalist faced a 45-minute road drive followed by Highway Code and manouevring tests.

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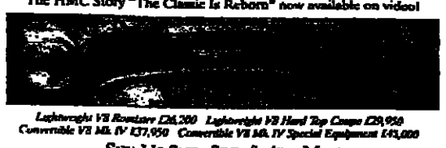
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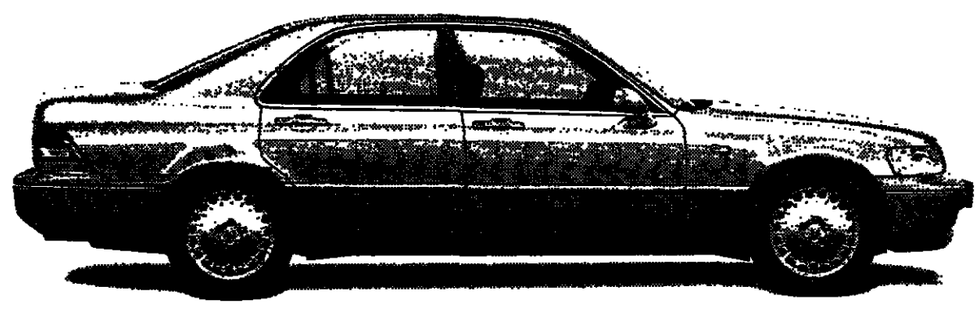
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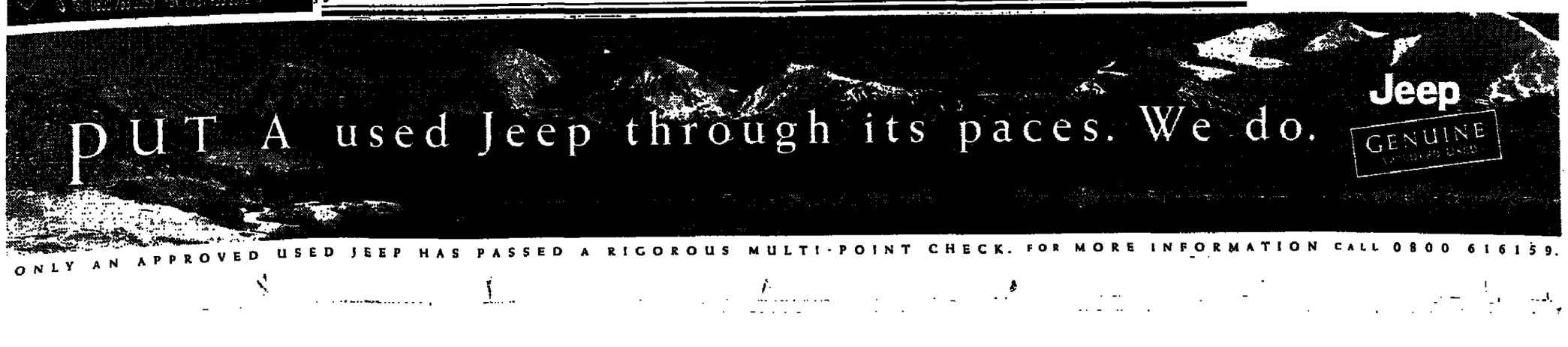
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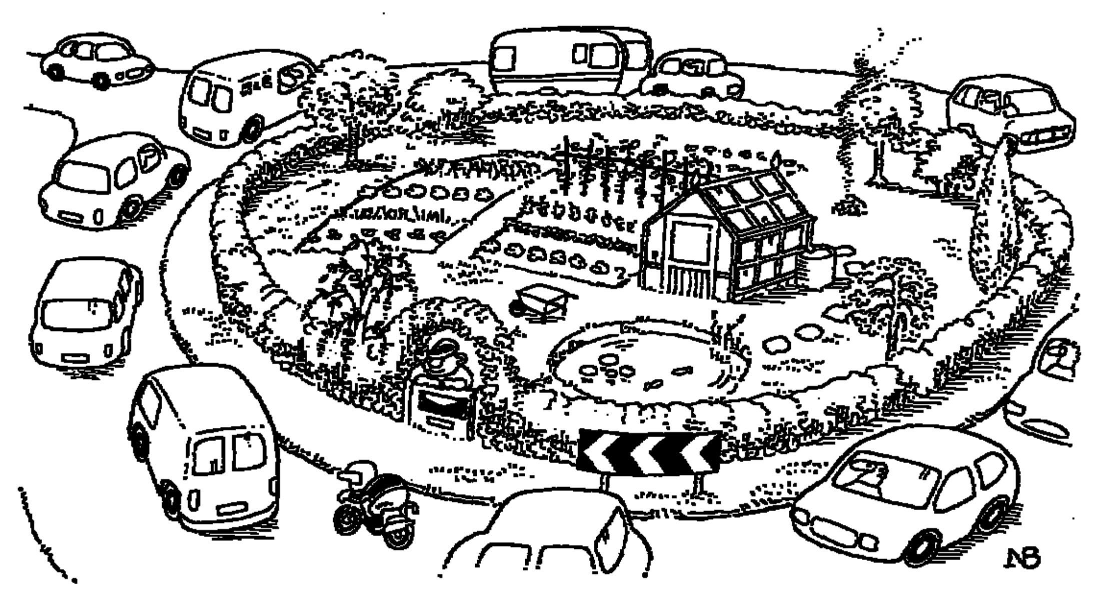
They calm traffic and keep toddlers briefly amused, but an outbreak of creative planting means that drivers no longer know what's around the corner

Invasion of the magic roundabout

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard



Roundabouts are such a staple of British motoring architecture that most of us rarely give them a second thought, except when we are in "look at that idiot" mode: look at that idiot changing lanes halfway round a roundabout. The word itself has a splendid rhythm and if you repeat it to a toddler a few times you will soon have him or her chuckling. But you haven't come here to read an application for the vacancy created by the death of Dr Spock.

There is not much doubt that roundabouts have done more good than harm in road safety, if only because they force people to slow down. I saw someone a while ago drive straight through the middle of a fairly large roundabout near Bristol without noticeably slowing down, but this radical approach is unusual.

But can we see where we are going? For the roundabout, albeit through evolution rather than revolution, has undergone marked changes in the past 20 years. I think the reason for this is that highways departments, being made up of real people, simply cannot resist fiddling with their creations. The roundabout as traffic-management scheme has gone, to be replaced by the roundabout as creative art. This is not a new idea but it is now spreading to the point where some of the roundabouts I encounter are positively lethal. There was a perfect illustration of what I mean back in 1995 when a news item appeared that has stuck in my mind since. I looked it up this week.

A pensioner suffering from dementia left his home in Basingstoke one day in July of that year, telling his family that he was going for a haircut. He never returned. Eventually his body was found in the middle of a roundabout, where it appears to have lain for 11 days. His widow said: "It is a large roundabout and he must have wandered across the road into the bushes."

The striking thing about that story, of course, is that it was possible for someone to spend 11 days on the roundabout without being seen. That tragedy helps to illustrate a wider reality, which is that roundabouts become more dangerous the more we clutter them up with bushes, trees and even buildings. One of the greatest safety features of roundabouts used to be that a car driver at one junction could see vehicles all around the roundabout. Often, that is no longer true.

Recently and without looking very hard I have found three roundabouts that warranted further attention so I parked the car (no, not on the roundabout) and walked back to have a look. One of them had four access roads, and a car driver at any one of them would be hard pressed to see a vehicle at the previous access. And the driver would find it impossible to see a vehicle that was already circling the roundabout until it was about 20ft away.

The reason for this is that the local authorities seem to have some sort of job-swap scheme under which the highways department has been taken over by the parks and gardens department. Bushes, trees, climbing plants, pagodas ... all these items sprout and roam across roundabouts, making some of them so high that their countours will shortly appear on Ordnance Survey maps.

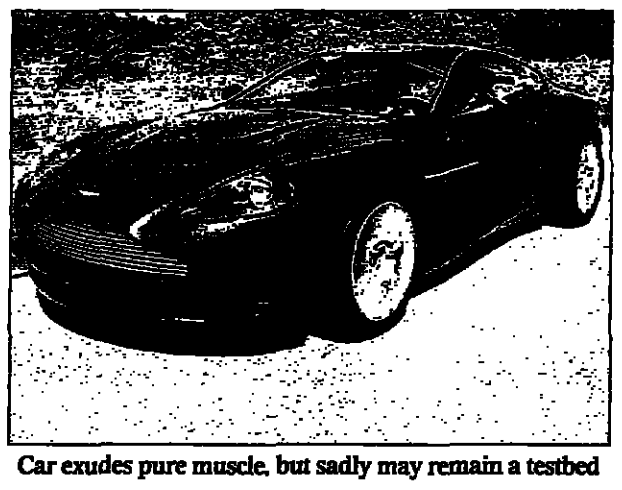
In some places roundabouts have acquired sponsors, as if they were football teams or Arctic expeditions. One supermarket chain has its name picked out in flowers on roundabouts near the store's branches: I am all for hard-pressed local authorities getting some extra money in, and in such a case the height of the flowers does not present a problem, although the fact that the flowers spell a word could cause a distraction.

My main bugbear is the sheer height and density of this "roundabout furniture" and I would be interested in hearing of examples that readers have encountered.

The largest roundabout structure I know of is the ruin of Charles Church, destroyed during the Second World War and left as a memorial on a roundabout in the centre of Plymouth. But drivers can see through it from all sides, proving that even large structures need not be a problem. Surely, though, blocking a driver's view at a roundabout represents the height of folly.

ASTON MARTIN'S SUPERCAR FOR THE FUTURE

Ian Adcock on the prototype Project Vantage



Car exudes pure muscle, but sadly may remain a testbed

EAT your heart out Pierce Brosnan, this is the car your alter ego, James Bond, should be driving, and not some tricked-up Bavarian executive saloon. Let me introduce you to Aston Martin's Project Vantage.

The specification could have been dreamt up by Q himself: the chassis is a lightweight structure of advanced honeycomb sheets, extruded aluminium sections and F1-type carbon fibre panels. That means it's ultra-light at just under 460lb, yet incredibly strong and rigid.

Suspension is by unequal-length front wishbones operated by F1-like pushrods with actively controlled front and rear anti-roll bars. Combine that with a purposeful-looking venturi to suck air out from under the chassis and hunker it down on to the road and you end up with a car that corners flatter than a hovercraft.

Bond would be pretty impressed by Project Vantage's performance as well. A new six-litre V12 being developed jointly by Ford and Cosworth pumps out well over 450bhp. A 200mph top speed and 0-60mph in four seconds is being touted, while any villain bent on world domination would have to be driving a pretty rapid set of wheels to keep up with the Aston's standing quarter-mile speed of 140mph. All this at a claimed average of 20mpg.

Formula One links abound in the car, and one of the most obvious and pleasing to use is the steering-column-mounted paddle gearshifts: right for up changes and left for down, and no clutch to worry about.

The difference between Project Vantage and many other show cars is that it actually works — albeit after a fashion. Despite its beautifully crafted carbon-fibre body panels, the car is currently pretty unrefined. It has been designed and built to convince the executives in Aston's owner, Ford, that all or some of the parts are worthy of further development and that budgets should be approved.

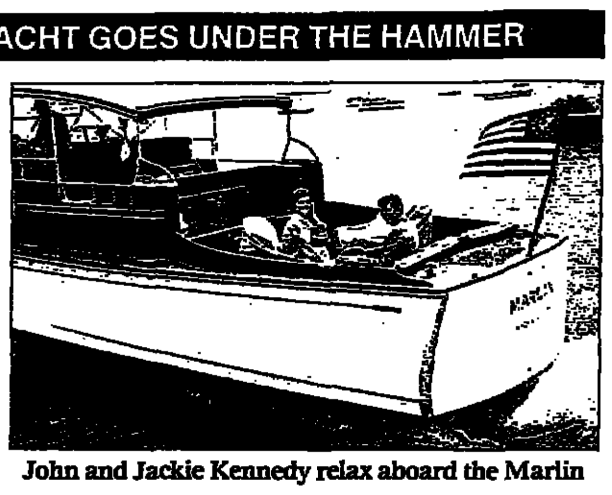
Bob Dover, Aston's genial chairman and chief executive, admits that Project Vantage is unlikely to make it into production — no matter how much the car is liked by the media and customers.

But Project Vantage does signpost Aston Martin's future. The glorious sounding V12 pulls like a train from 1,500rpm onwards, even in fourth gear and would make an ideal power unit for the Aston Martin Vantage's replacement.

Mate that to the automated manual and you have an intoxicating blend that makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up.

The aluminium chassis leads to all sorts of intriguing possibilities for Aston Martin, as its modular construction means a new, larger coupé, convertible and a four-door, could all be made on the same basic structure.

KENNEDY'S YACHT GOES UNDER THE HAMMER



John and Jackie Kennedy relax aboard the Marlin

THE YACHT that President John F. Kennedy was aboard when he heard the Berlin Wall was being built at the height of the Cold War, is to be auctioned by Christie's in New York today.

The *Marlin*, which was owned by the Kennedy family for two decades at the height of its popularity from 1952 until 1970, is expected to fetch $200,000 (£125,000).

The 52ft yacht was commissioned by the car magnate, Edsel Ford in the 1930s. He parted with the vessel in 1935, when it was bought by Schenley Distillers. When the Second World War began, the *Marlin* was drafted into coastal patrol service, and was later owned by a yellow taxi company before being bought by Kennedy's father.

The young President Kennedy was preparing to dine on fish chowder with his family on a warm August afternoon in 1961 when the alarming news about the Berlin Wall was relayed from Moscow.

The yacht was also visited by luminaries such as astronaut John Glenn, and politicians Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara.

Other Kennedy memorabilia to be auctioned along with the *Marlin* includes fishing rods, chairs and galley utensils. A complete set of yacht construction drawings will also be included in the sale.

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GOLF VR6 H/Line 3dr 97P Blackberry AC Lthr C6 7K £20,595 Collingwood 0171 7234332

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THE TIMES SATURDAY APRIL 25 1998

around the corner

...rks and gardens department ...shes, trees, climbing plants ...godas ... all these items sprout ...d roam across roundabouts ...aking some of them so high that ...eir countours will shortly appear ...Ordnance Survey maps. In some places roundabouts ...ve acquired sponsors, as if they ...ere football teams or Arctic ...peditions.

R THE HAMMER

TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing 0171 407 7899				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	14.24	150.51		0.65
Do May to Mar 27	140.19	140.19		
UK Equity Safeguard	[illegible]	[illegible]	- 0.77	2.02
US Eqy Safeguard	265	282.53	+ 1.72	
Cash	95.23	364.02	+ 1.30	
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	414.50	441.30	- 8.90	1.43
UK Small Cos	95.1	102.46	- 2.16	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	164.8	172.56	- 1.51	1.89
Geared UK Index	2643.6	2943.65	- 59.00	5.76
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	65.8	68.73	- 0.14	6.32
Monthly Inc	45.1	49.64	- 0.51	7.39
International Funds				
American Gen	332.6	352.60	- 8.60	
American Strat	252.5	263.65	- 5.65	
Jt UC Incom	2063.3	2228.03	- 76.05	4.00
European Gen	409.0	433.70	- 8.93	0.68
European Strat	175.3	187.65	- 3.12	
Japan Gen	102.5	109.10	- 4.43	
Asia Pacific	65.4	69.56	- 0.57	1.09
Pacific Cos	171.4	183.47	+ 1.02	
Greater China	194.2	207.75	- 2.25	
Latin America	107.0	114.39	+ 1.50	
Gl Growth	149.0	157.92	- 3.47	0.11
Balanced Exempt	176.5	184.89	- 4.80	2.14
Global Strategy	51.41	54.97	- 0.76	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
General Acc	958.90	1019.00	- 13.00	2.24
General Inc	777.70	826.60	- 11.10	2.24
UK Growth Acc	636.60	658.70	- 10.60	2.24
UK Growth Inc	412.10	438.70	- 6.83	2.24
Higher Inc Acc #	1241.00	1320.00	- 24.00	4.21
Higher Inc Inc #	626.70	656.60	- 11.60	4.21
Gilt/Fxd Int Acc	156.40	164.30	- 0.63	5.56
Gilt/Fxd Int Inc	97.72	103.20	- 0.50	5.56
N American	477.40	507.90	- 10.10	
Europe	558.20	604.40	- 2.00	0.47
Brit Ecuiti	130.30	138.50	- 2.00	1.59
Brit Friendly Acc	166.30	176.90	- 2.25	3.99
Brit Friendly Inc	105.20	111.92	- 1.40	3.99
Global Opps	134.30	142.80	- 1.50	0.52
Balanced Acc	87.33	86.92	- 0.56	2.15
Balanced Inc	73.79	78.49	- 0.51	2.15
Japan Acc	33.42	35.55	- 1.03	
Pac Basin Acc	286.20	304.40		2.19
AXA SUN LIFE UND MGRS LTD				
Enquiries: 0117 989 9000				
Discretionary	70.39	74.89	+ 0.76	
UK Income Inc	87.08	92.64	- 1.13	2.19
Equity Inc Inc	41.81	44.15	- 0.30	6.58
High Yld Inc	127.00	135.10	- 1.40	3.65
Inc & Gth Inc	119.07	125.30	- 1.10	2.34
UK Smaller Cos	49.98	53.17	- 0.27	1.72
Pacific Grth	34.79	37.00		0.65
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed	147.40	156.40†	- 0.90	5.72
High Inc Eq	246.00	263.10†	- 1.50	3.98
Worldwide B	271.60	288.10†	+ 2.70	3.65
American Gr	586.80	626.50†	- 9.10	0.22
Asian Pacific	223.90	239.50		0.52
Assets & Earngs	395.00	422.50	- 3.70	2.42
Euro Capital	297.60	318.30	- 3.00	0.25
Extra Inc	43.68	46.47†	- 0.33	9.00
General	355.70	379.50†	- 3.80	2.54
Global Opps	85.65	91.12	- 1.00	0.35
Japan	77.07	82.43	- 3.72	
Managed	56.01	59.58†	- 0.15	4.28
Mastertrust	205.80	219.90	- 0.30	1.09
US Emerg Cos	242.40	259.30	- 2.00	
Ethical	104.80	111.30	- 0.80	1.64
International	158.50	168.60	+ 1.40	0.59
Dividend Growth	91.35	97.18†	- 0.66	3.61
Global Gr Sec	80.55	85.92	- 0.03	2.03
Latin Amer	79.82	84.92	- 1.23	0.79
Capital Res	156.60	156.78	+ 0.20	4.45
ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0141 275 9000				
N&P UK Gr	129.40	137.60	- 1.50	1.43
Equity Income	178.00	189.30	- 2.30	3.32
Extra Income	330.90	351.20	- 2.40	4.34
Smaller Cos	112.20	119.30†	- 0.80	1.76
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 822 100				
Can Gen Dist	308.10	326.60	- 4.20	1.84
-do- Income Dist	164.60	185.00†	- 2.50	2.73
-do- Accum	595.70	630.90†	- 8.60	2.73
G & Fxd Inc	44.61	46.88	- 0.19	4.64
Cash	370.30	375.70	- 6.70	1.45
Euro	193.00	203.00	- 0.70	5.70
Far East	260.70	277.10†	- 2.50	0.26
North American	376.90	389.80	+ 11.00	
Far East	192.30	205.70	+ 2.10	1.03
UK Smaller Cos	314.30	336.20	+ 1.90	0.86
European	156.40	167.20	- 1.80	0.44
Japanese Growth	28.77	33.49†	- 1.41	
High Income	307.50	328.20†	- 4.70	2.81
European Pref	235.91	253.52	- 4.89	0.09
Portfolio	106.14	112.91	- 2.38	1.65
UK Income Inc	131.02	139.38†	- 3.05	3.34
CAPEL-CURE LIVERS UT MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7455				
American & Gen	337.70	357.10†	- 10.80	
European Inc	154.50	164.20	- 0.20	0.10
Smaller Cos (4-1)	127.20	135.40†	- 1.20	1.52
Growth	791.00	841.50	- 2.20	1.55
Income & Growth #	665.30	697.20	- 7.50	3.84
-do- Accum #	1043.30	1109.90	- 12.20	3.84
Japan & Gen	48.65	51.51†	+ 2.47	
Hallmark Gwth	1645.00	1714.00†	- 7.00	1.33
-do- Accum	2079.00	2168.00	- 10.00	1.33
Special Sits	182.20	193.90	- 1.16	1.52
High Yield	2141.00	2208.00	- 23.00	3.29
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	124.74	132.63	- 0.40	2.17
American Portfolio	183.66	195.02	+ 2.19	0.41
European Portfolio	214.41	227.98†	+ 6.83	0.28
High Income	57.03	60.00	- 0.11	6.22
Japanese Portfolio	47.08	49.83†	- 2.53	
Pacific Portfolio	115.87	124.60	- 0.84	1.16
UK Equity	127.35	135.85†	- 1.37	2.61
UK Equity & Bd	73.98	78.39	- 0.74	4.80
UK Smr Cos	62.36	66.70	- 0.94	1.75

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Source: FT Information

* Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return). † Ex dividend; ‡ Middle price; ... No significant data. # Periodic Charge deducted from capital; @ Exit Charge.



FLYING OFF 59

Investors lured by Thomson travel perks discounts

WEEKEND MONEY

PENALTY 53

A fixed-rate loan can have disadvantages



Banking on a paper fortune

Conal Gregory looks at the rising market in old banknotes and gives a warning about forgeries



RICHARD POHLE

White gold: Irene Tilmont of Spinks holds up a rare 1921 Wellington Somerset £5 note. Provincial notes are much sought-after today

Many people finding a roll of old banknotes in a drawer do not presume that the stash of cash has any hidden value. They simply swap them for replacement notes of the same denomination. They could get a better deal from a specialist dealer or auctioneer. Even the white five pound note issued in the 1950s is worth £95 today, against just £32 in 1983.

Paper money was first issued 11 centuries ago by the Chinese, although they stopped it in 1450 and did not return to this form until the mid-19th century.

The first notes in Europe were produced by the Stockholm Bank in Sweden, in 1661, to secure some time before more coins could be minted. The Bank of England followed in 1694 although the earliest one in its museum dates from June 1697 and was for £22 — paid in two instalments of £5 and £17. Early notes were for three purposes: receipts for cash, counter receipts for bills deposited against which notes or cheques could be drawn, and an account receipt, rather like depositing cash in a saving account today. Notes were generally not issued for less than £20, says John Keyworth, the Bank's curator.

With the magic words "or bearer" on such notes, they could be freely circulated. The Bank of England will always accept its notes, even though they are not currently in circulation and not legal tender. It even paid out on a claim from a passenger on the ill-fated *Titanic* who had a purser's ticket for items deposited which included three five pound notes.

The main factors that raise a note's value are age, as early as possible; high demonination; specimen rather than issued; low serial number and good condition.

Historic Bank of England notes are certainly sought-after. Spinks, the leading dealer and auctioneer of banknotes, sold three 18th-century notes signed by Abraham Newland at its October sale last year, all black and white with ornate vignettes of Britannia. The £1 value of 1798 made £2,000 (estimate £1,000-£1,400) plus 15 per cent buyer's premium but the £2 note of the same year was more than double at £4,400. Newland's £50 note realised £15,000, reflecting the fact that few notes of that era above five pounds come on the market. A mid-19th century £5 note signed by Matthew Marshall can make £2,000-£2,500, up from £1,500 six years ago.

In this century, a branch issue by the Bank of England can show good appreciation. A 1936 Liverpool £100, signed by K.O. Peppiatt, made £550 in 1990 but has jumped to £1,250 today. A crisp, fine £500 note from the same branch and date is £5,500.

> **The Bank paid out against a purser's ticket for the deposit of three £5 notes on the Titanic**

Specimen notes — really just printers' mock-ups — are keenly collected. In March Bonhams sold one by Perkins, Bacon & Petch for £120. Although it showed a head of George IV, it was probably mid-Victorian. A ten-shilling 1930s note was £220 seven years ago and now costs £1,400-£1,500 at a dealer.

Unusual examples can provide keen bidding. Bank of Scotland notes used during the Peninsular War from the early 19th century were marked "emergency issue". A £2 worn note can make £300, rising to £1,000-£1,500 for a fine one, up from £200 and £700-£1,200 in 1993.

From 1914 to 1927 the Treasury issued notes. Phillips sold a selection in February with £420 paid for a £1 note of August 1914 signed by the Permanent Secretary. The ten-shilling Treasury note used by the British Expeditionary Force in the Dardenelles was overprinted in Arabic. Five years ago it sold for £100-£120 and now makes £200-£300 used, or £500 mint.

Watch for forgeries. The Nazi 1942 imitations of British notes are very convincing but look for the tiny flaw in the watermark for the genuine, says Sarah Dennehy of Spinks. Watch, too, for modern US notes, particularly the $100, often faked in Eastern Europe. Take advice on Hong Kong currency, which was also much copied.

Provincial banknotes are particularly strong. A Saffron Walden Bank 1820s £5 note has risen from £35 in 1984 to £250 today, says Simon Narbeth of Colin Narbeth & Son, a London dealer. Any denomination of the Colchester Bank is in demand from £250 a decade ago, to double now. A Halifax £5 note from the 1830s has moved from £50 in 1977 to over £1,800 today.

On Tuesday Spinks will auction several regional examples including a £1 note from 1817 issued by the Market Drayton Shropshire Old Bank (estimate £150-£200).

Collectors of Welsh currency have seen a £5 note from the Salop & North Wales Bank from the 1860s rise from £65 in 1990 to £125 now. A £5 Gloucestershire Banking Company 1834 note, issued at Abergavenny, realised £320 at Phillips in February (estimate £180-£200).

Scottish notes are particularly popular. Look for some of the little-known banks — such as the Banking Company in Aberdeen (whose five shilling note from 1799 makes £420) and Caledonian Banking Co (a 1900 £1 note realises £580 and still carries hand signatures). Notes in guineas are tipped by Brian Asquith of Phillips, who sold a one guinea Stirling Banking Co note of May 1818 for £270.

Low serial numbers can greatly boost the price. A Lloyds Bank £1 note froom 1929, issued in the Isle of Man, made £1,150 earlier this year, because it carried the number 'C000I'.

On overseas notes, Australia, Italy and the former British dependencies are strong, but France and South Africa weak. A one lira 1866 note from Banco Regio Cassiere Comunale di Messina made £1,150 (estimate £400-£500) at Spinks last autumn. An 1884 £5 specimen Australian note from a joint stock bank has risen from £820 six years ago to £1,300 today.

INFORMATION

- International Bank Note Society (£11 pa). Details from Sally Throwney, 36b Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HN.
- *Standard Catalogue of Provincial Banks & Banknotes*, by Geoffrey Grant (Spinks).
- *World Paper Money*, 8th edition, edited by Colin Bruce II (Krase).
- *Bonhams 0171-393 3949*
- *Narbeth 0171-379 6975*
- *Phillips 0171-468 8373*
- *Sotheby 0171-293 5314*
- *Spinks 0171-930 7888.*

Why current notes will not rise in the future

Disappointment is in store for anyone hoping to make a killing from Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the coming of the single currency. While the euro will eventually entirely replace the individual notes and coin of EMU member countries, it is not worth keeping a stash of francs and pesetas in the hope that they will immediately gain in value.

Modern-day currency tends to make a poor investment, although this does not not deter some of the most ardent hoarders. Some 56 million Englishone pound notes, which ceased to be legal tender in 1984, have been held on to for posterity. The £1 coin was introduced on April 22 1983.

Even before the euro note goes into general use, the sheer volume of cash in circulation makes it most unlikely that any appreciation will be seen for several generations at least. Even then the note would have to be in absolutely pristine condition as well as carrying a very low serial number.

The amount of notes and coins in circulation in Britain give an indication of the levels in other European Union nations. Some 1,344,610,000 million notes were in circulation at the end of February last year.

JACQUI SPRAY

*Source: Micropal, offer to bid, income taken, for period 17/11/86 to 1/3/98 (equivalent 5 year figure +85.75%, 1/3/93 to 1/3/98). #Source: Micropal, all figures offer to bid, gross income reinvested, for periods ending 1/3/98. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The price of units and the income from them is not guaranteed and can fall as well as rise. The Equity Income Trust has been available as a PEP since May 1993. Full written terms and conditions are available on request. For your security, all calls are recorded. Royal & Sun Alliance Unit Trust Management Limited, registered in England, no 2170242, is a member of the Royal & Sun Alliance Life & Pensions Marketing Group. Registered Office 1 Bartholomew Lane, London, EC2N 2AB. Members of the Royal & Sun Alliance Life & Pensions Marketing Group are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority, solely for life assurance, pensions and unit trust business, and by IMRO.

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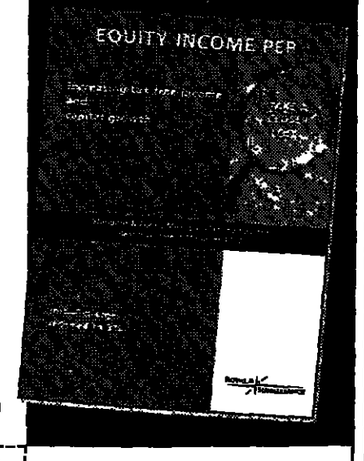
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هكذا من الاصل

When simple means worse



COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

Dorothy Parker thought the words "cheque enclosed" the most beautiful in the language. But, for savers, the word "streamline" and any of its synonyms, including "restructure" are among the most dangerous since they can result in your cheque shrinking.

Whenever a financial services business uses the word "streamline" in any communication, you should immediately be on the alert. The changes will be presented to you as an improvement. But, in many cases, they will be driven by expediency and the desire to cut costs. You may emerge the loser.

This week Fidelity Investments and Northern Rock each revealed a revamp of its offerings.

Fidelity proposes to convert 20 of its unit trusts into an open-ended investment company (OEIC), to create "a more flexible, simpler and better value product range". As we explain on page 63, the adjectives "flexible" and "simple" may be misused in connection with the OEIC. We cannot yet know whether this vehicle will prove to be an improved version of the unit trust, or expensive Eurotrash.

To ensure they do not emerge with a poorer deal, the 310,000 investors in these trusts should use Northern Rock's assertive savers as a role model. On Monday, the bank said it was (those words again) "streamlining" its postal accounts, "simplifying" their terms and conditions (see page 62).

Northern Rock customers — who have learnt to be vigilant, immediately became suspicious and, within 24 hours, *Weekend Money* had received a dozen calls from readers who had spotted the reform would mean they receive less interest.

While Northern Rock was right to reduce the number of postal accounts, it should not use the exercise to cut returns for some savers.

Several readers have already wrung a concession from the bank, obliging it to transfer their cash into new accounts. Others will now demand the same — which will teach the Northern Rock to mind its language in any future pronouncements. Miss Parker may have said that doubt was one of the things she would have been "better without", but it is the saver's principal safeguard.

Shabby deal

REMORTGAGING accounts for 25 per cent of the mortgage market, as borrowers switch loans to cut repayments.

Anyone embarking on this process should be aware that loyal borrowers can be shabbily treated. Your existing lender will be reserving the lowest rates for customers of its competitors. Your faultless repayment record is seemingly irrelevant. However, when you are close to defecting to a rival, you may finally be contacted by your lender's "retention team" with a slightly better offer.

This is another reason why the selling of every type of mortgage should be brought within the Financial Services Act.

PEP FILE

It is later than you think for bonding

Time is running out for personal equity plans (Peps), which will be withdrawn from sale in April 1999. Pep File, a new regular series, will help you to make the best use of your allowances in the months that remain. This week, we focus on corporate bond Peps.

With the UK stock market hitting such high levels, investors who feel the market has peaked are becoming more inclined to look at corporate bond Peps as a means of diversifying their portfolios.

Corporate bond Peps are often recommended either to more cautious investors who prefer to avoid equities, or for people — quite often those who have retired — who are looking for income rather than capital growth from their investments.

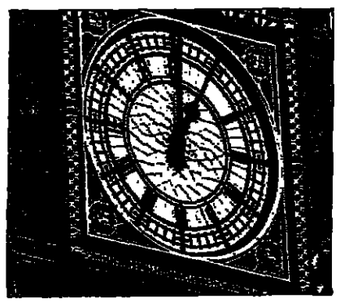
Corporate bonds are, in simple terms, a means by which companies borrow money from investors. In return investors receive a fixed rate of annual interest and the promise that the bond will be repaid at a specified date in the future.

At present it is possible to invest £6,000 in corporate bond Peps and, just as with other Peps, they will be maintained after the introduction of the individual savings account (Isa) next April.

It will not be possible to put more money into any Peps after that date, but investors will still be able to put money into corporate bond funds subject to the Isa investment limits of £5,000 a year.

Corporate bond Peps had a good year in 1997 with the top funds showing a return of over 20 per cent. "We are recommending them. With long-term interest rates moving down, it pushes up the capital value," says Justin Modray, investment adviser at Chase de Vere.

One key influence on long-term interest rates is the progress towards European monetary union, which is expected to bring UK interest rates lower in line with those in Europe.



Corporate bond Peps also look attractive in the light of changes to the tax credit available on share dividends, which reduces from 20 per cent to 10 per cent next year before being abolished entirely. Interest payments on corporate bonds still retain their 20 per cent tax credit. "We recommend corporate bond Peps because of this and as part of a balanced portfolio," says Yvonne Rose, from Diane Saunders, the adviser.

When it comes to the yields or income offered by corporate bond Peps, it is important, says Alastair Conway, managing director of Clark Conway, the adviser, to keep expectations on a realistic level. "Yields of 6.5 per cent to 7.5 per cent is a sensible band," he says. A markedly higher yield may look enticing, but also usually indicates a higher risk attached to the investment.

When comparing Pep performance it is also important to look at the total or gross redemption yield which, unlike the income yield, reflects charges and the expected capital gain or loss.

Charges are another element to consider. Initial charges are around 3-4 per cent at present and are usually taken out of the capital invested, while annual charges taken from income average about 1.5 per cent. Look carefully at any fund which takes its annual charge against capital, which may be a way of the managers looking to boost the income.

One of last year's top performers and currently recommended by a number of financial advisers is Commercial Union's PPT Monthly Income Plus.

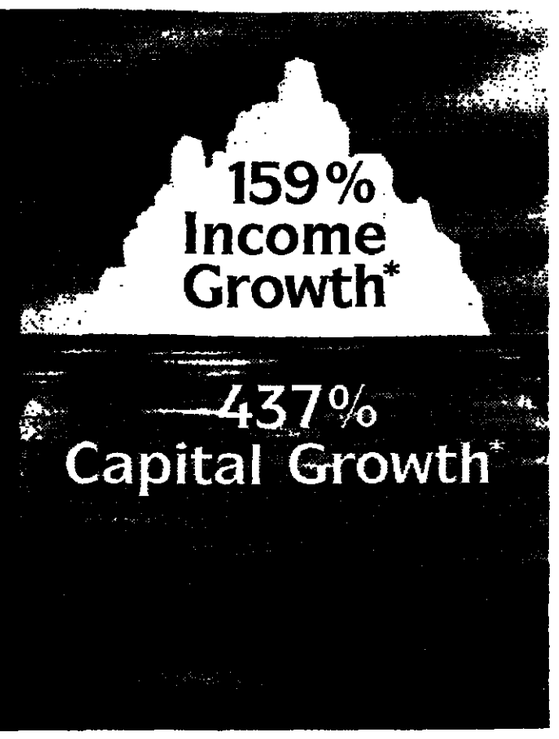
The initial charge is 4 per cent while the annual charge is 1.3 per cent.

The Legal & General Corporate Bond Pep, also recommended by several advisers, is unusual in that it carries no initial charge and has a low annual management charge of 0.5 per cent.

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Don't write off the superstores



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Shares in Tesco fell by 6 per cent in three days this week after the leading supermarket group reported a seemingly pleasing 11 per cent rise in profits to an astonishing £832 million. This is now one of Britain's truly top companies, valued at well over £12 billion. Sainsbury, though bested by its long-time rival, is not that far behind at £9 billion. Asda and Safeway, number three and four, are on offer at £10 billion the pair. Even the pioneering but still regional Wm Morrison group is big league.

The fear is that they will no longer be able to buck the trend of the economy. The initial intake of breath over Tesco was occasioned by a mild warning from Terry Leahy, its chief executive. Sales had grown by 6.1 per cent in the past year, before allowing for newly-opened stores, but slipped to 5 per cent since. And the slowdown was about to reach food. Retail sales figures pointed the same way.

Expansion plans appeared to show the impact of planners' attempts to drag shoppers back to the high street. Having opened eight superstores out of a total 23 new sites last year, Tesco expects to manage only three this year, although more space will be added overall. Such doubts are bound to nag when Tesco shares sell at 25 times earnings net of one-off charges. But these fears sound familiar.

The Treasury's own Budget forecast suggested that growth in consumer spending would fall from 4½ per cent last year to under 4 per cent this year and about 2 per cent in 1999, in line with output. There may be some wishful thinking here. Governments like to project investment and exports leading the economy. But spending will not be buoyant.

Doubts about openings have also been around before. Remember those dire predictions of imminent saturation a few years ago. The planning orders may be a blessing in disguise for investors. Instead of new stores competing with each other, smaller formats and town centres will return the leaders to their traditional if unedifying role of beating the hell out of small shopkeepers.

The big boys will also come into conflict with Somerfield/Kwik Save. Of these, Kwik Save was a casualty of the price war that was to see Tesco *et al* cowering before US and continental newcomers offering cheap goods and no frills to consumers hit by recession. The leaders showed their flexibility by bringing in basic ranges but keeping the frills. No wonder the sector has outperformed the stock market average over most periods from one to 20 years. There has usually been a laggard supposedly facing doom. Not so ago it was Tesco. Then Asda fell by the wayside. Sainsbury slumped from top to bottom of the class. Safeway is now the incorrigible dunce after three profit warnings, none of them dire.

In such a fast-moving *grand prix*, it is not surprising that some competitors lose places by being stuck with outdated formats or tired management. As Tesco and Asda have shown, these can be put right, provided the retailer maintains its essentially warm and trusting relations with customers. On this platform, new products such as banking can be added to provide longer term growth. And if size is thought critical to competitiveness, Asda can get together with Safeway.

Safeway aside, supermarket shares certainly look pricey if the economy marks time, but that is true of most shares, notably those targeted banks.

Susan Emmett looks at an unusual investment

Time to dip a toe into Teps?

A campaign was launched this week to stop life offices from paying out on surrendered endowment policies without telling the holder about the option of selling on their investment.

Every year about £90 million is lost by those who surrender their with-profits endowment policies and Beale Dobie, a leading market-maker in traded endowment policies (Teps), wants life companies to inform customers of the existence of the second-hand endowment market.

Christopher Dobie, joint chief executive, said that last year £600 million of with-profit endowment policies were surrendered, which on average could have been sold for 15 per cent more on the traded endowments market. He says more than 60,000 people will lose out by an average of £1,478 by surrendering a with-profits endowment to their life company this year.

Q Can any endowment be sold in the traded endowment market?

A For several years only 30 per cent of endowments have matured. Of the others, 30 per cent are cancelled in the first three years and 40 per cent are surrendered or sold. Most people who give up a policy do so because they have opted for another type of mortgage although divorce and debt clearing are also common reasons. However, only traditional with-profits endowments that have run for at least seven years and have a minimum surrender value of £2,000 are suitable for the second-hand market. Unfortunately for many homeowners, unit-linked endowments are not traded.

Q How much money can I expect for my policy?

A The amount you get depends largely on the market-maker, so shop around. Some might even pay you up to 50 per cent over the surrender value. However, profits are usually lower. Beale Dobie said that a man who took out an endowment to cover a £100,000 mortgage in 1988 which has the guaranteed sum assured of £20,000 as well as the bonuses to date, would receive about £12,000 on redemption. The policy could fetch between £13,500 and £14,000 on the traded endowments market.

However, Mr Frank Meenwell was "flabbergasted" when he discovered how much difference there was between market makers.

After reading about traded endowment policies, Mr Meenwell, 47, decided to sell two of his seven endowments to raise money for his daughter's wedding. Policy Portfolio bought the Yorkshire prison officer's Axa Equity & Law endowments for £17,000, almost £5,000 more than the nearest competitor offered. Surrendering them would have paid only £9,000. Mr Meenwell said: "I am flabbergasted to think there is so much difference. I'm very pleased with the whole concept."

Q Why do investors buy second-hand endowments?

A Although the Institute of Actuaries has predicted that returns on endowments were set to fall, Teps can still give a decent low-risk return. For example, a second-hand policy bought for £28,093 with monthly premiums of £64.12 and maturing in June 2001 could reach a maturity value of £41,716 — a return of 10.3 per cent a year, provided current bonus rates are maintained. Another attraction is that the seller has already paid the charges.

The Teps market will also offer investors the opportunity to select an endowment to suit their requirements. A Tep may mature in two years or up to 15 years and initial investments range from £2,000 to over £100,000. They are used to provide for family events such as a wedding, university education, or even a retirement home, although recently carpetbaggers have been investing in Teps, hoping the life company may demutualise.

Q Who offers Teps as an investment?

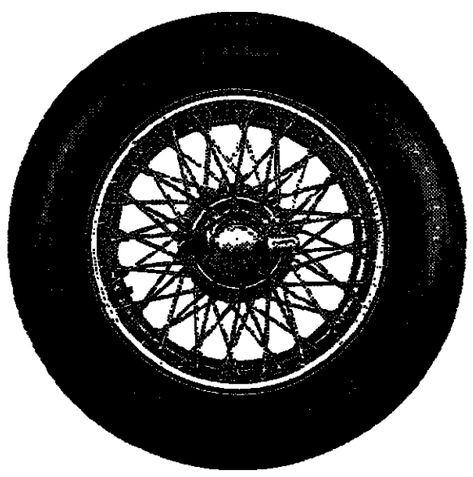
A Trading of endowments has gone on for more than 150 years but until the late 1980s the market was operated solely by a single auction house. Today there are many companies based throughout the UK buying and reselling to investors across the country. They are known as market-makers. Many leading Tep companies are regulated by the PIA.

In 1992 several Tep companies formed the Association of Policy Market Makers (APMM) — a good first port of call for those seeking to buy or sell a with-profit endowment.

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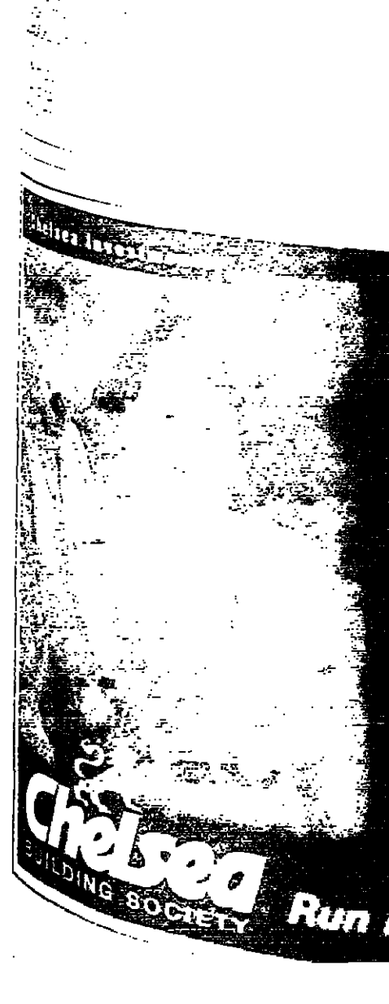
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The housebuyer's fear of the penalty



Penalty: buying a home can be like a game of football. Does one take a chance on a fixed rate loan knowing there could be a hefty payment if you want to get out?

Caroline Merrell opens our special report with answers for the confused

Homeowners move as families expand and contract, and financial circumstances change. The chances that you will pay to redemption the first mortgage you take out are remote, yet mortgages are still usually sold for 25 years.

Loans themselves are also becoming increasingly complicated. At one time, borrowers had only one product to choose from — a plain vanilla repayment loan, where a mixture of interest and capital are paid off throughout the 25-year period. At the end of the term, the borrower had no more money to pay on their property.

Now, prospective homeowners have a raft of products from which to pick. They will be routinely offered either a repayment or interest-only loan; fixed rates, capped rates and discounted rates are regularly on offer. Mortgages now come packaged with savings plans, such as endowments and Peps, and other insurances such as accident, sickness and unemployment (ASU) cover, permanent health insurance (PHI) and household insurance.

Confusion over mortgages still abounds, as is revealed by the figures from the Building Societies Ombudsman. The office received about 4,000 complaints from borrowers last year. The greatest number were from those who had mistakenly taken out repayment mortgages instead of interest-only loans, and vice versa. Another source of irritation is redemption penalties routinely charged for those with fixed-rate mortgages.

Many borrowers complained that the charges are not properly explained — some are surprised that redemption penalties still exist after the fix or discount has ended. Recently, Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said she would increase the policing of mortgages if a new voluntary mortgage code failed to protect consumers adequately. We examine the available options.

Q Should I have a repayment or an interest-only mortgage?

A Under a repayment mortgage, borrowers pay off a proportion of the interest and some of the debt throughout the term of the mortgage. They are deemed to be entirely free from risk — at the end of the term, there is nothing left to pay. Alastair Conway, of Clark Conway, the mortgage broker, said: "Repayment mortgages are suitable for those who are in their 40s, if the house they are buying is the last purchase they are to make. It may be more appropriate for younger people to take an interest-only mortgage."

On a month-by-month basis, interest-only mortgages appear to be cheaper. However, anyone taking out an interest-only loan where, as the name suggests, only the interest is paid off each month, will also usually have to take out some form of savings plan which could either be a personal equity plan (Pep), or an endowment scheme. Potential borrowers should be warned that endowment schemes often carry high charges, and produce less than average returns. Peps could be a better method of paying off a loan, although they are to end next year.

Q How much will the lender allow me to borrow?

A Lenders will usually allow borrowers to take out loans that are up to three times their annual salary, or if the loan is a joint one, they can take out a mortgage that is equivalent to two-and-a-half times joint income. Some lenders will allow greater income multiples than this, but borrowers should be warned that interest rates are at an historically low rate. Any rise could be a considerable problem for anyone who had overstretched themselves financially.

Q Should I choose a fixed rate or discounted rate loan?

A Many mortgage brokers believe that fixed rates offer a particularly good deal at the moment. They give borrowers the security of knowing exactly what they will be paying over a certain period. Again mortgage brokers warn borrowers not to become overstretched — they must be able to cope with any rise in monthly repayments when they emerge from the fixed rate. Ian Darby, of John Charcol, the mortgage broker, said: "We would show clients what the repayments will be like if the interest rate rose to 10 per cent when their fix was finished."

Discounts are less popular because borrowers do not have the security of knowing exactly what their repayments will be each month. The discount will rise or fall with the prevailing level of interest rates. Both discounts and fixes require borrowers to make some kind of guess about the future direction of interest rates. At the moment, the consensus is that rates will fall as the UK approaches economic and monetary union (EMU).

Q What about the redemption penalties on fixed and discounted loans?

A Borrowers who take out fixed or discounted loans should watch out for redemption penalties. These will be charged if the loan is cashed in in the first few years. Redemption penalties are usually a few months' interest, which can run into thousands of pounds. Redemption penalties can also be charged if the borrower tries to pay off a portion of the loan.

Q What about all the other insurances that lenders seem to be keen to sell me when I take out a mortgage?

A Anyone who takes out a loan that is *not* an endowment mortgage will be offered term assurance. This is life cover that will pay off the loan, in the event of the borrower's death. It is not mandatory to take out term assurance, but as it is relatively cheap, most people do take it out. Rates vary according to age and health.

Mortgage brokers warn borrowers to be wary of taking out mortgages where a condition of the loan is that household insurance is taken out with the lender. Mr Darby said the insurance tends to be the premier product which may be more cover than is necessary. He said: "It is much better to research the market, and to find a loan where insurance is not tied in."

Accident, sickness and unemployment (ASU) cover and permanent health insurance (PHI) will also be offered. The first type of cover is a recent invention. It has been developed because the State will only give limited help on mortgages in the event of unemployment. ASU is complicated and is designed to fit in with state benefits. Anyone who is offered it should first decide whether they really need it, and then shoud read the small print carefully to ensure that it does not carry too many restrictions over the payout. ASU policies start at about £7 a month. PHI will cover income in the event of redundancy. Again borrowers should decide whether they really need it. They should also shop around and read the small print.

How green is my mortgage?

Mortgage lenders may have to enshrine the concept of protecting the planet from harmful emissions. A Private Member's Bill, sponsored by John Burnett, Liberal Democrat MP for Devon West, currently going through Parliament, could make it compulsory for lenders to carry out a survey of a property's energy efficiency when undertaking a mortgage valuation.

Ron Bailey, parliamentary co-ordinator for Friends of the Earth, says that the Bill will oblige building societies and banks to rate the energy efficiency of a property using the standard assessment procedure (SAP). They will also be required to recommend a list of cost-effective energy efficient improvements.

The SAP rating takes into account a number of measures that can influence how a property conserves energy. This includes draught-proofing on windows whether the dwelling has loft, underfloor and cavity wall insulation; the type of glass used; whether the property has an energy-efficient boiler; and what type of heating controls there are on radiators. Mr Bailey says the survey will list cost-effective measures that could improve the property's efficiency.

Ahead of any reforms, there is already a growing market in green loans. The Co-op Bank is contemplating offering green loans while the Ecology Building Society already offers loans that can be used to rescue a property from being demolished.

The Norwich & Peterborough Building Society has launched a "green" mortgage that rates new homes on their energy efficiency. The society says the scheme is designed to encourage developers to build homes that are energy-efficient, saving the owner money and protecting the environment. But only properties that receive a SAP rating of 80 or above will qualify. SAP ratings range from one to a hundred with the norm around 60.

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Seven steps to a cheaper mortgage

A million borrowers face a mortgage shock this year as fixed rates expire and they are switched to variable rates, with monthly repayments almost doubling.

However, mortgage misery is not inevitable. Many borrowers are unaware that they can remortgage to another fixed or discounted rate once their fix expires, potentially saving thousands of pounds.

Halifax, for example, has 30 fixed-rate products that reach maturity in the next four months, but it is not the bank's policy to inform borrowers that they have options other than simply switch to the current variable rate of 8.7 per cent.

Halifax said: "We do not automatically tell people that they can transfer to a new fix, because some borrowers will have penalties going on for longer than the term of the fix, so it may not make sense for them to remortgage."

These penalties — which can add up to six months' interest payments — are the biggest barrier to remortgaging, but mortgage brokers say that even with these costs, it can make sense to remortgage. Remortgaging is also not just for borrowers coming off fixed or discount deals — anyone with a variable rate loan can cut their costs by remortgaging (see case study).

Even homeowners who have had arrears for a month or two are not automatically excluded. Now that house prices have recovered, lenders are more lenient. However, people with a serious arrears record will have little luck remortgaging.

Moving a mortgage can involve significant paperwork, and fees that typically add up to about £1,000. So the decision to switch lenders must be taken carefully. However, if you decide to go ahead, what steps do you need to take to remortgage successfully?

■ **1. Act quickly:** Your lender will notify you that your fixed or discount rate will end. If you do nothing, you will be switched to the variable rate, now about 8.7 per cent.

■ **2. Check redemption penalties:** Many loans fixed at 4 to 4.5 per cent two years ago end in the next few months, but most have penalty periods for another two or three years. Freeing yourself from such a mortgage can cost about 5 per cent of the loan's total value, wiping out much of the benefit of remortgaging. However, Nick Deutsch, of First Mortgage Securities, said: "For people with penalty periods, we can still find a deal. We can source loans at 3.89 per cent from Northern Rock or 3.95 per cent from West Bromwich, so it is not difficult to show that remortgaging is worthwhile."

■ **3. Check what your existing lender will offer:** Most lenders will offer existing borrowers a new deal, although it is unlikely to be as good as deals for first-time buyers. Halifax offers borrowers coming off its fixed rates a further two-year fix at 7.1 per cent, compared with its cheapest 5.65 per cent deal for first-time buyers. Even more galling for Halifax's customers is that this week it welcomed people wanting to remortgage from other lenders, such as Abbey National, but it is not offering the same cheap deals to its own "transfer" customers. Roddy Kohn, of Kohn Cougar, an independent financial adviser, said: "Lenders often treat you as a second-class citizen once you have become a borrower. Most will make a revised fixed-rate offer, but they only make it good enough to make the hassle of moving elsewhere too unattractive."

■ **4. Barter with your lender:** If you have a perfect repayment record and a lot of equity in your home, a lender may be willing to make an improved offer. First Mortgage said: "There is more discretion at branch level than most borrowers realise." Many banks and building societies employ "retention teams" to make sure they do not lose customers. Simon Tyler, of Chase de Vere Mortgage Management, said: "They will offer better terms if you really push them."

■ **5. Compare products:** There are hundreds of fixed and discount deals in the market. Many people want a new fixed rate for security in payment levels, while others want a discount in the belief that mortgage rates have peaked and are heading down. Borrowers can do their own research. Check mortgage deals in *The Times* Money Information Service on page 60 — or consult an IFA. But beware using a broker just as a bargaining chip against your existing lender — the broker may charge for his service.

■ **6. Check costs:** A remortgage will involve a valuation of your home, costing about £200 on a £100,000 property. Legal costs will be about £400, and the new lender will charge an arrangement fee of about £300. Your old lender will want £50 to £60 to release deeds. Roy Boulger, of John Charcol, the mortgage broker, said: "Fees usually add up to around 1 per cent of the value of a typical mortgage, although more as a proportion of a smaller loan. For a mortgage of only £30,000 to £40,000, remortgaging costs make it less worthwhile. It becomes a question of costs and benefits, although we can offer deals which make a contribution to costs, such as a 6.5 per cent loan fixed to 2003 with a 1 per cent cashback designed to pick up the costs."

■ **7. Avoid paperwork:** Moving a mortgage is not as complex as moving bank accounts, but can involve some legwork. Many mortgage brokers try to ease the burden by packaging the remortgage process. Chase de Vere said: "The hassle factor is a large reason why many people don't remortgage. But it can be done over the telephone, or in a half hour to one-hour meeting with a broker. We can be in the position of confirming the mortgage offer within two to three weeks and draw down funds within a month of that date."

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First steps into your own home

Susan Emmett helps new buyers dodge the mortgage pitfalls

The housing market for first-time buyers has been booming since expensive mortgage indemnity fees were dropped by several of the big lenders earlier this year. The increase in the house price paid by new borrowers was more than double the national average last month, according to the Halifax.

Mortgage indemnity fees make a huge difference to first-time buyers who need to borrow more than those who already have a foot on the house buying ladder. As most first-time buyers take out a loan of nearly 87 per cent of the value of the property, they inevitably have to face paying mortgage indemnity guarantees (MIGS) — a form of insurance which protects the lender not the borrower — which lenders charge for loans over 75 per cent of the value of the property.

Halifax, Nationwide, Abbey National, Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich are among the main lenders that stopped charging MIGs to customers taking out loans of between 75 per cent and 90 per cent of the value of their property.

Philip Cartwright, of London and Country Mortgages, said: "The market for first-time buyers is definitely picking up at the moment. It was busy before, but it is manic at the moment. Things have been helped by the big drop in mortgage indemnity fees."

However, the abolition of the charges is only worthwhile for first-time buyers who can put down a deposit of at least 10 per cent. Those borrowing 95 per cent on a property worth £100,000 would typically be paying £1,600 for mortgage indemnity while someone borrowing at 90 per cent would escape the charge completely. This is because the fee is calculated as the difference between 75 per cent and 95 per cent and not between 90 per cent and 95 per cent.

The first thing that a first-time buyer, who is usually between 25 and 34 years old, needs to decide is how much to borrow. The maximum that most lenders will advance is three times the household income.

With the recent changes, first-time buyers who can afford a slightly higher deposit are best advised to stick with lenders that are no longer charging this type of insurance.

Next step is the option between a mortgage with a fixed rate or one that may offer a discount or cash back on a variable rate. This decision is mostly governed by your attitude to risk. According to Halifax, which has 2.5 million borrowers, 40 per cent of first-time buyers plump for fixed-rate mortgages because of the security that they offer. Fixed rates will buy you certainty for the first few years of your loan whatever happens to interest rates. You can fix your rate for two, three or five years.

London and Country Mortgages said Portman Building Society offers a good deal at 6.49 per cent fixed until May 2000 at 90 per cent of the value of the property with no redemption fee at any time. For a three-year fix at 90 per cent of the property value, Nationwide charges 6.79 with no redemption penalty at the end of the three years. Those wanting a slighly bigger loan at 95 per cent of the value of the property are charged 6.89 per cent.

However, as many believe that rates will fall in line with Europe as a result of monetary union, discounts and cashback mortgages that are linked to the lenders' standard variable rate, are worth considering.

At 8.1 per cent, Nationwide has one of the lower standard variable rates. The building society offers a two-year discount at 1.4 per cent with no redemption penalty and a more generous discount of 2.7 per cent with a five-year tie-in period.

First-time buyers must also decide how to pay back their loan. There are two methods: repayment, where monthly bills include the interest and a portion of the capital repayment, or interest-only payments backed by an investment such as an endowment or a personal equity plan (Pep) aimed at paying off the capital at the end of the contract. Repayments are usually more expensive but less risky. Investment-based mortgages are a bit more of a gamble as the investment may not grow sufficiently to cover the loan.

Halifax said Pep mortgages are still popular despite the Government's plans to replace Peps with the new individual savings account (Isa) next April. While existing Pep holders will have no limits on their savings, new investors in Isas will have a lifetime limit of £50,000 which will restrict those wanting a mortgage based on this type of investment.

However, endowment mortgages have lost much of the appeal that they had during the 1980s because investments have often failed to give good returns and pay off the loan. More recently the Institute of Actuaries has predicted that returns are set to fall.

HUW EVANS



Sara Taylor and Peter Hurn can relax as their payments cannot rise for three years

Couple graduate to mortgage rung

Peter Hurn and Sara Taylor, recent graduates, wish to get a foot in the house-buying ladder before prices rise any further.

The couple left university last summer and set their hearts on a three-bedroom modern flat in the outskirts of Cardiff.

Peter, a 24-year-old law graduate working as an administrator for a Bristol window-making company, said: "We went out to buy the biggest place we could afford. We wanted somewhere we would be happy to live in for at least five years."

He and Sara, who works for the environment agency in Cardiff, chose a straightforward fixed-rate repayment mortgage with the Principality Building Society. The rate is fixed for three years at 6.75 per cent and the mortgage package includes a 2 per cent cashback.

Peter said: "We shopped around for the best package, and wanted to know what our repayments would be for at least three years so that we could budget."

Peter decided to buy his first home before prices rise further, and was pleased that the Chancellor did not announce any further cuts to mortgage interest relief at source (Miras) in this year's Budget.

"It is the right time to buy, prices are rising and we thought the longer we leave it the worse it will be to get a mortgage."

The couple put down a 10 per cent deposit on a property worth £32,500 and their £29,000 mortgage will cost them £200 a month.

Peter said: "If you look at the cost of renting, a mortgage is a lot better.

"If you rent you could be paying an awful lot and have nothing to show for it. I know getting a mortgage is a big commitment but I'm about the right age to deal with that."

S.E

The ups and downs of cash

Cashbacks, a lump-sum payout to borrowers, are one of the incentives used by lenders in the fight for mortgage custom. Once, borrowers had to be grateful to be granted a loan. Now they need inducements.

Northern Rock, one of the most aggressive names in the sector, is offering cashbacks of 8 per cent of the loan. Borrow £250,000 and you can have £20,000 back. At the Alliance & Leicester, 5 per cent of the advance is available up to a maximum of £15,000.

A cashback may seem irresistible, providing a lump sum for decorations or furnishings when your budget is stretched. However, the lender will recoup the payout over the term of the loan.



DISADVANTAGES

Most cash-back loans are offered on the back of variable rate mortgages. This means that you take the risk that interest rates could rise. The risk is a high one because cashbacks carry redemption penalties which can last for five or more years. If interest rates are suddenly increased borrowers will find it difficult to switch loans without having to pay back some of the cash.

Recently, however, according to Ian Darby from John Charcol, the mortgage broker, lenders have begun to offer cashbacks linked to fixed-rate mortgages. However, he noted: "Fixed-rates tend to be around 6.5 per cent, while those offering cashbacks tend to be around 7.25 per cent."

To assess the value of a cashback, it is worth examining the Northern Rock scheme in detail. The bank locks the borrower into its variable rate scheme for six years. The current rate is 8.5 per cent. Northern Rock's arrangement fee of £395 is at the higher end of the range which generally is between nothing and £300. Another disadvantage is that the borrower must take out Northern Rock's building and contents insurance otherwise it will reduce the cashback by a percentage point to 7 per cent of the loan instead of 8 per cent. If you take the 8 per cent cashback but later cancel the insurance you will be charged an extra 0.35 per cent on top of your mortgage rate until 2001.

ADVANTAGES

Many borrowers use the cashback to help to fund the deposit on their mortgage. Ian Darby says if a person wants to take out a 95 per cent loan and put down a 5 per cent deposit which will leave them with no financial resources, it may be sensible to opt for a cashback mortgage.

Or, you could use a cashback to pay off or reduce an expensive short-term loan. For example, if you took out a car loan of £4,800 for a three-year term and have to pay £200 each month, a cashback could clear this debt. Other advantages are to help pay off fees and stamp duty, removal costs and home improvements.

THE DEALS

Britannia offers a variation on the cashback theme: its ten-year scheme will credit the borrower's mortgage account with 15 per cent of the original loan after ten years. On a £100,000 loan you would receive a credit of £15,000. The 15-year scheme, gives a £25,000 bonus at the end of the term. But don't forget you will be locked into a variable rate for a long time.

Partial cashbacks may have greater appeal, but be aware that fixed-rates with cashbacks will not be as low as some of the fixed products which are around at present.

Or you can opt for a discounted variable rate with a cashback. The Woolwich offers a discount of 2.5 per cent, bringing the variable rate of 8.7 per cent down to 6.2 per cent in the first year, plus a 3 per cent cashback.

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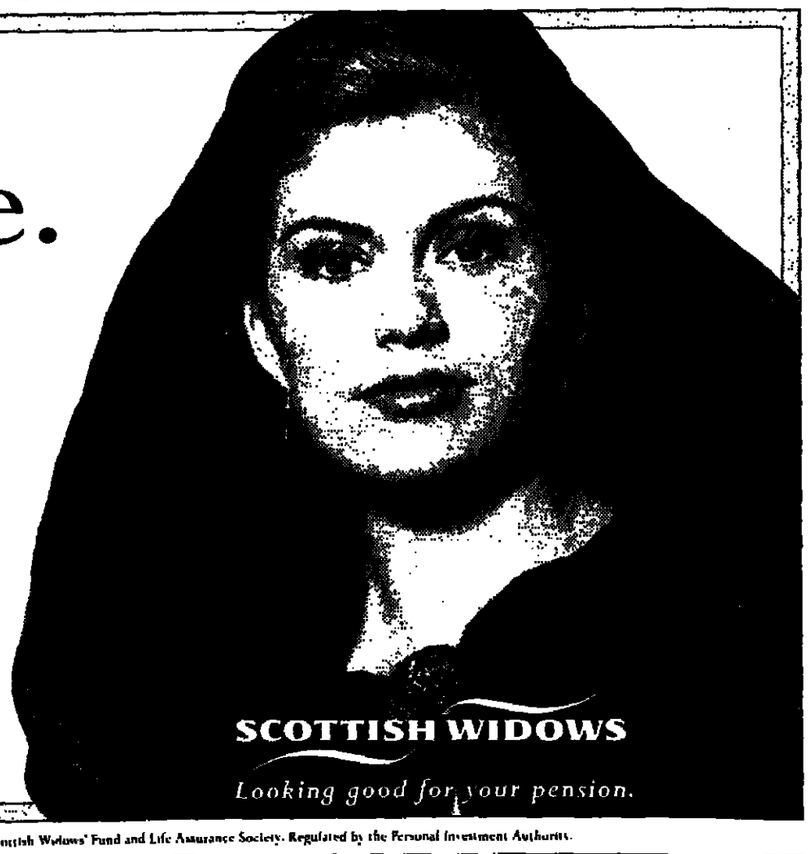
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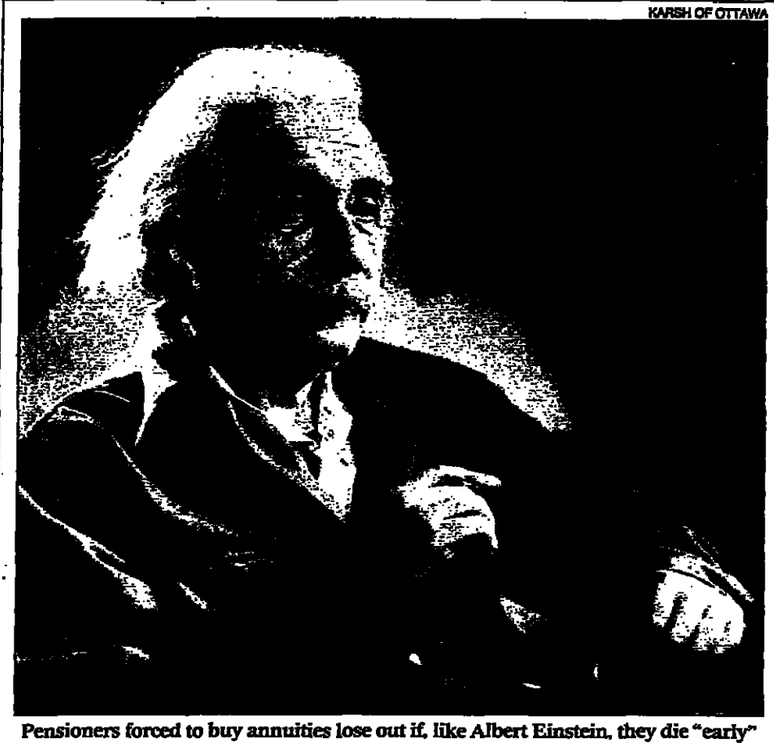
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KARSH OF OTTAWA



Pensioners forced to buy annuities lose out if, like Albert Einstein, they die "early"

Move to free over 75s from annuity torture

With annuity rates falling at an alarming rate, the pensions industry is lobbying the Government to make radical changes which would free retired people from having to buy an annuity with their pension fund.

A number of influential groups are pressing the Treasury to remove the rule that forces people to buy an annuity when they reach the age of 75.

The move would be the most significant change to pensions legislation since 1994. Before that date, you had to buy an annuity within five years of retiring. Now you are allowed to take a portion of your fund and put off buying an annuity in the hope that by the time you are 75 the annuity rates will have improved.

However, both the Inland Revenue and the Treasury will need to be persuaded since the Treasury is known to believe that four years of the new system is not sufficient time to test it.

Some of the pressure for change is coming from the trustees of pension funds, who feel that the current system is unfair. They believe that as well as looking at the possibility of removing the age limit altogether, the Government should be considering ways of ensuring that those who buy an annuity do not lose out.

At present, if you buy a single-life annuity — one that covers just you rather than you and your spouse — but then you die early, the remaining value of the fund returns to the insurance company. This means that if you delay your annuity for as long as is allowed, and then, like Albert Einstein, die just one year after your 75th birthday, you will have received just a few thousand pounds from the annuity, and perhaps some of the 25 per cent of the fund you are allowed to take as a tax-free cash lump-sum. The rest of your fund will revert to the insurance company. You have effectively lost the bet against your life expectancy and that could mean you have lost almost 75 per cent of a fund worth hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Pension trustees believe that your spouse or children should enjoy the benefit of the fund you have built up, or the remaining money should be returned to the pension scheme to which you originally belonged.

The Association of Pensioneer Funds, which speaks for trustees of small self-administered schemes, believes that funds could be returned to family members or to pension fund schemes net of tax. This would provide the Inland Revenue with what Michael Norris, chairman of the APF, calls "a windfall tax". He added: "We would be digging into the profits of insurance companies, but we think they make enough money already."

MARIANNE CURPHEY

Each £10 saved buys £1 pension

Helen Pridham spells out stark facts about why you should plan early

MONTHLY SAVINGS NEEDED FOR A £10,000 PENSION FUND

Figures show net savings needed before tax relief and growth rate of 9%

Age now	Retiring at 55	Retiring at 60	Retiring at 65
25	£57	£36	£23
35	£142	£89	£57
45	£456	£283	£179

Source: Norwich Union

YOU AND YOUR PENSION

Having your own personal pension is essential if you are not a member of a company pension scheme. But — as almost everybody involved with pensions will tell you — that is not the end of the matter. You have to check regularly that you are saving enough to achieve the level of retirement income you want and that your pension company is performing as well as it should.

Most people are not putting enough into their personal pensions. The problem is that so few of us understand how costly it is to buy a pension at retirement, says Steve Bee, the pensions expert at Scottish Life, the insurance company. He tries to get the message across by comparing pension preparation to that of buying a house.

"A house and a pension are the two biggest assets that most people acquire during their working lives but unfortunately they do not usually see their pension in this way. Otherwise they would not be content to put just £30 or £50 a month into it," he says.

"As a rough rule of thumb, you will need around £10 in your pension fund for every £1 of regular pension you want at retirement. So if you think you need a pension of £10,000 a year you will have to build up a fund of £100,000. The cost of an average house is currently around £77,500 and repayments on a 25-year mortgage for that amount would be more than £500 a month, but few people put anywhere near as much into a pension."

The Norwich Union, another large pension provider, has been trying also to educate people about the cost of pensions. It has produced a gadget called an "Underfundometer" which shows how much you will need in your fund to afford a varying levels of pension at retirement. Andy Agar, the company's pensions manager, says: "Most people are very surprised about the figures involved."

The amount needed to save to build up a fund of £100,000 varies according to your age when you start your pension and how early you hope to take retirement, as the table shows.

On top of the net amount of savings shown, tax relief is added by the Government. So the actual amount invested in the case of a 35-year-old basic-rate taxpayer saving to age 65, for example, will be £75. Many people still overlook this valuable boost the Goverment gives to pension savings.

Once you recognise the need for action, it is important to start saving as soon as you can. The other message Norwich Union has been trying to get across is the cost of delaying pension planning. It can be worse to delay than to start a pension and then stop it again in a few years' time. For example, a man of 30 who saves £50 a month for ten years and then stops altogther will actually be better off at retirement than a man who does not start saving until age 40 but then continues putting aside £50 a month for 25 years.

Assuming a 9 per cent growth rate, the first would have a fund of £70,400, the second £54,100. It is the extra years of investment growth that make the big difference.

If you do not already have a personal pension plan, you will find there is no shortage of choice. Many organisations offer them, from traditional insurance companies to retailers, such as Marks & Spencer. They are all differ slightly. One major difference is the cost. Charges are expressed in various ways, although today all providers must show the effect of charges on the same basis, in the form of a reduction in yield. This shows the percentage by which charges will reduce uniform investment returns of 9 per cent. The greater the reduction, the more expensive the policy.

The most recent report about charges by the Personal Investment Authority (*Life Assurance Disclosure: Three Years On*) found that on a £60 per month 25-year personal pension plan, reductions in yield varied from 0.8 per cent to 2.8 per cent, while the average was 1.8 per cent. Ask your pension company, financial adviser or salesman, who will have access to a copy of this report, how the plan they recommend shapes up in this comparison. If the charges are above average, steer clear.

If you are within ten years of retirement and are starting a personal pension for the first time, contributing to your pension by means of single lump-sum contributions rather than regular premiums is usually cheaper because of the lower commission payments to salesmen. In the end, however, the most important influence on the size of your pension fund will be a company's investment performance. Although past performance is no guarantee of future success, it a useful indicator of how skilfully a company's investment managers have coped in the past.

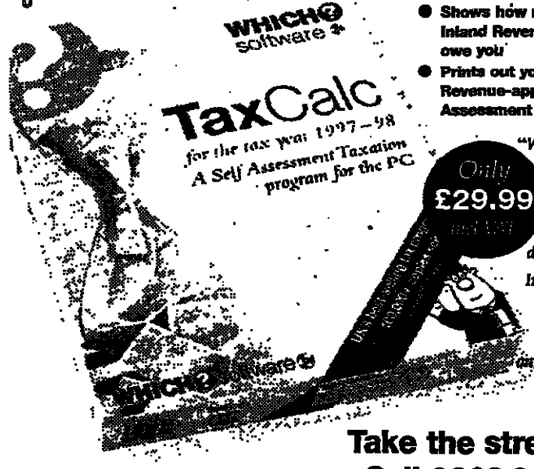
Flexibility is another key consideration, according to independent financial advisers such as Alan Lakey, of Highclere Financial Services in High Wycombe. "Ask if you can vary premiums without incurring extra charges, whether unlimited premium holidays are permitted and what the charges are if you need to stop paying into your pension altogether."

If you already have a personal pension plan and want to increase your savings, it is usually more cost-efficient to pay the extra into your existing plan than to start a new one. But not always. Robert Reid, of Syndaxi Financial Planning based in North London, says: "It is important to review the plan's performance and that your fund is still appropriate."

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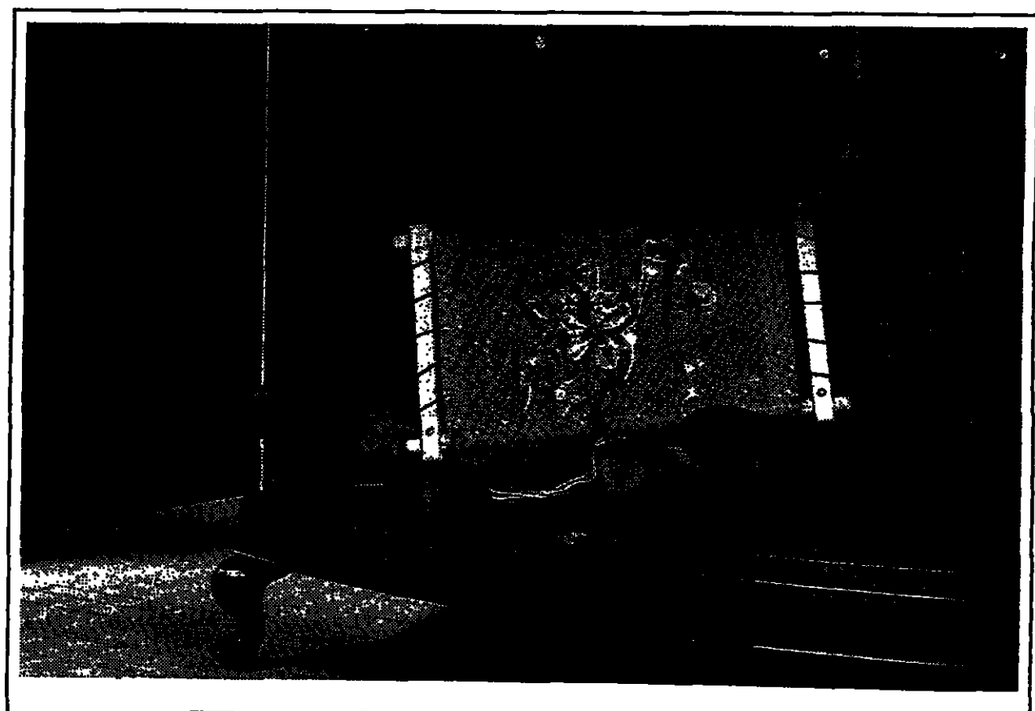
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MARIANNE CURPHEY

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OU AND YOUR PENSION



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Storm blows in across Irish Sea

The investment clubs followed here have seen changes, says Matthew Wall

The air is often clearer after a storm. And so it has proved at the Maydown Mergers Investment Club in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

When *The Times* paid another of its regular visits to the club it had undergone some rather dramatic changes.

A crisis had blown up around the continuing poor performance of Powerscreen, the engineering company that is still reeling after the disclosure of accounting irregularities.

When we last visited the Mergers they had bravely taken the falling share price as an opportunity to buy more shares in the company.

But *many members were* opposed to this move at the time, and have subsequently been proved right. Powerscreen's share price, once 763.5p, has now dipped below 200p, despite the resignation of its directors.

The decision to buy more shares highlighted the growing disparity between the "amateur" members of the club and the "professionals".

Those who had done a lot of research into companies, analysing earnings growth, borrowing, directors' share-dealings and such like, were finding that their hard work was often being ignored by those members who believed investing was just like gambling. Democracy, in this case, was exposing a clash of interests.

At the club's annual meeting two weeks ago, they decided to make inactive members follow specific stocks in an effort to encourage greater participation. They also voted to increase the monthly contribution to £40 per person. These measures have forced several members to reconsider their positions and resignations are expected.

*Mike Carroll, club chair*man, said: "I expect that when the dust has settled we'll be left with about 12 members, which is better. We'll be much more ruthless about setting stop-losses and acting on them, and we'll be thinking much more seriously about taking profits when shares do well."

The Mergers bit the bullet and dumped Powerscreen, writing off £1,500 in the process. They also jettisoned Airtech, the chronically underperforming technology stock, at a loss of around £500.

On the positive side, Pace Micro, the digital set-top box manufacturer, has recovered strongly, turning a £350 loss into a £300 profit. Mayflower also continues to anchor the portfolio in the black.

The club's recent experiences show that finding members with similar levels of *enthusiasm and commitment* is just as important as finding the right stocks in which to invest.

Meanwhile, the Victoria Investment Club in Truro, Cornwall, is laying down the champagne in the expectation that the unit value of their portfolio will top £2 for the first time soon. It now stands at £1.94 and notional profits are approaching £9,500. The portfolio is worth nearly £32,000.

Concerned at the high level of the stock market, they decided to take profits on one of their star performers, Wescol, the construction engineering group. They sold 3,818 shares at a profit of £1,150, but retain 2,000 shares.

Fortune Oil, the oil exploration company, was abandoned, after sustained underperformance, at a loss of £135. But the club used the proceeds and *cash reserves to stock up* on two new shares.

SDX Business System, which builds digital communications systems for medium-sized businesses, has been growing fast in a highly lucrative market. It is chasing arch-rival BT.

Victoria's other acquisition, Britt Allcroft, is a media licensing company, which owns the rights to Thomas the Tank Engine and other fictional *children's characters*. The blocks of shares cost £2,000 each and the club has high hopes for them both.

While the Maydown Mergers have been charting a course through stormy seas, members of the Victoria Investment Club have been cruising down the Nile.

M.W



PAUL SLATER APEX

No dramas here: members of Victoria Investments Club still deep in discussion at the Chiverton Arms, Redruth

Pitfalls exposed by tough going

Investment clubs are the flavour of the month. They have grown rapidly in popularity thanks largely to the boost in the numbers of private shareholders following the demutualisation of the building societies and insurance companies last year.

Belonging to an investment club helps you to learn faster about the stock market by sharing experiences and research. Since you pool monthly contributions to buy shares, you also share the risks. Monthly contributions are typically £25 per member and clubs usually have up to 20 members.

Organisation and administration can be tricky, so ProShare, the lobbying group that promotes wider share ownership, has produced a guide to setting up an investment club, normally costing £25. Readers of *The Times* can apply for the guide at a discounted price of £15 plus £3 p&p by writing to: ProShare, Library Chambers, 13&14 Basinghall St, London EC2V 5BQ or by ringing 0171 394 5200.

M.W

Portfolio @ 21/4/98 worth 31,854.77. Notional profit of 9,484.41.

Company	Shares	Price now	Profit/loss
Wescol	2000	70.00p	619.20
Media Business Grp	2000	108.30p	949.00
Dolphin Packaging	899	262.50p	754.90
Mice Group	18630	18.00p	1,293.40
Television Corp	875	228.00p	189.75
RPS Group	750	300.00p	647.12
Robert Walters	800	540.00p	2,788.48
UMECO	588	410.00p	411.13
Isotron	460	532.50p	453.17
Taylor Nelson	4006	105.00p	1,467.71
DBS Management	545	282.50p	40.77
SDX Business System	714	275.50p	-31.63
Britt Allcroft	786	241.50p	-98.61
TOTAL 9,484.41			

Portfolio as @ 20/4/98 worth 11,607.75. Notional profit 3,108.91.

Company	Shares	Price now	Profit/loss
Bodycote	113	1050.00p	62.78
Chirosclence	113	298.50p	-223.73
Galen Holdings	356	486.00p	715.69
Go-Ahead Group	300	600.00p	323.15
Mayflower	1,150	223.00p	1,289.30
Norwich Union	364	462.50p	468.94
Pace Micro	1,746	38.50p	307.95
Woolwich	333	371.00p	164.82
TOTAL 3,108.91			

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Karen Woolfson fills her goody bag at the company store

Shares that can perk you up

Thomson Travel Group's high profile flotation and its offer of a 10 per cent discount on holidays to investors has highlighted the appeal of shareholder perks.

Generous incentives to shareholders are increasingly being used by companies as a form of loyalty scheme. This has two advantages: small investors hold onto the stock long term, helping to support the share price even through lean times. In addition, shareholders are more likely to buy a holiday with the company, use their services or browse through their shops, because they know they will benefit from a substantial discount.

The incentive schemes range from big discounts off clothes at Austin Reed and cut price rooms in Hilton Hotels to free samples of food at Bensons Crisps's annual meeting. However, Justin Urquhart-Stewart of Barclays Stockbrokers warns investors that no matter how attractive the perk: "The key element is not the cake or the icing but to remember it is just the cherry on top. So it is important to buy the whole cake or package otherwise cherry picking can go horribly wrong."

Investors who chose a portfolio of fairly promising stocks with perks attached such as Airtours, British Airways, Granada and BT three years ago, could have made a healthy return. Holdings of 100 shares in each of these stocks would have cost a total of £1,800 in April 1995 and now be worth £2,830 which is an increase of 63 per cent.

Granada's shares have shown the biggest rise during this period, doubling in value from 569p to 1058p and offer attractive perks on top. You are required to buy a minimum of 80 ordinary shares to obtain the perks which include discounts of up to 12.5 per cent at Forte Posthouse, Travelodge Hotels and Little Chef restaurants. However, benefits are only available when paying with the Forte Gold Card which is issued subject to a person's credit status.

Gavin Oldham, chief executive of The Share Centre, says when investors calculate share price returns it is important to include the actual savings made on discounts to arrive at the true overall return. People who regularly stay in hotels and stop on motorways for something to eat could have saved a significant amount by putting money into Granada.

British Airways has also performed well over the past three years and shareholders who often travel abroad or within the country have also benefited from generous discounts. You need to hold a minimum of 200 shares to obtain a discount coupon that entitles the bearer and up to three additional family members — booking and travelling with them — to 10 per cent off the price of any published British Airways fare.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Worth a punt: Chepstow Racecourse where, however few shares are owned, investors get a free day in the members' enclosure on spring bank holiday

That could save a huge amount of money if you and your family are planning to take a holiday across the other side of the world.

Airtours lures people with a similar deal. You will receive 10 per cent off holidays booked through the Shareholders' Holiday Advice line that relates to those in certain brochures like Cruising and Eurosites. Perks attached to travel, leisure and retail stocks are in fact among the most common because they act as the ultimate "loyalty" card. The theory behind this — if you are persuaded to buy shares in a company with perks then you are more likely to buy its products.

Mr Urquhart-Stewart points out that as buying shares becomes simpler and people become more accustomed to owning them, companies are starting to see them as a marketing tool that can create and protect a loyal client base. He says: "Tesco loyalty cards give you a discount or cash back to spend, but many people have a whole pile of loyalty cards. At some point, companies may deem it more likely that they can encourage people not to shop elsewhere by attracting them as shareholders who receive dividends and perks on their shares.

However, the whole exercise can go wrong. If you were among the unfortunate who bought Eurotunnel at £3.50 per share when it was floated because of the free or discounted trips incentive, then your fingers have been badly burned. The stock is worth just 56p today and your savings are very unlikely to make up for this dismal performance.

You may, on the other hand, be a dedicated ferry traveller living near Dover so it could make sense to buy P&O shares which offer discounts of up to 50 per cent. You have to buy £700 worth of shares to get the discount so it may be wise to anticipate how much you will use P&O's ferry service in order to estimate the likely savings. Then weigh up the risk of investing £700 in P&O, the company and stock's outlook, the saving on travel and make an informed prediction.

Mr Oldham maintains that buying a share just for the incentives can be a good idea in some cases, as long as you are sure to use them. He stresses: "If you want to buy for the perk, make sure you don't commit too much money to the stock. If you do then view it as an investment."

Some companies will give you a perk even if you hold a single share in it, which could be lucrative, though realistically it would probably cost more money in charges to buy one share than the price itself. The point is that if you buy through one of the cheap dealing services like The Share Centre where the minimum purchase commission is £2.50, it could be worth purchasing a small number of shares to obtain the perk.

You may be interested in Chepstow Racecourse which, however few shares owned, offers investors, a free day's racing in the members enclosure on the spring bank holiday Monday every year. Alternatively, Friendly Hotels gives a 10 per cent discount on accommodation plus other privileges for no minimum number of shares. Ladbroke offers 10 per cent off rooms in Hilton Hotels in the UK and overseas, plus 20 per cent off some short break packages.

Scottish & Newcastle offers discounts on alcohol, Thorntons on confectionery, Sketchley on drycleaning, Barratt Development's on homes, Burton Group on purchases in stores like Debenhams and Principles, while computer to software group Psion offers 15 per cent off one machine each year.

Yet some of the more attractive perks require buying a significant number of shares. Psion, for example, will only give a discount on a machine if you own 1,000 shares which would set you back £2,840. So check the minimum number of shares required to obtain an incentive before being drawn into the fold.

It is also crucial to find out whether the company only offers benefits to shareholders whose shares are registered in their own name, otherwise you could find shares held through a nominee for example those in your personal equity plan are not entitled to the perks.

HINTS FOR PERK SPOTTERS

- Barclays Stockbrokers publishes a shareholders' booklet of company benefits each year which details not only what companies offer but also whether or not you can hold the stock through a nominee and still be entitled to it. But you must bear in mind perks alone are not usually the best reason to buy a share.
- Barclays Stockbrokers: 0345-777-400
- The Share Centre: 0800-800-008

Step carefully if you venture out along the Pennine way

For the right investor, venture capital trusts offer a heady mixture of potentially high returns and a generous cocktail of tax reliefs.

First launched in the autumn of 1995, VCTs were designed to encourage investment into small, unquoted companies, providing them with the capital they need to grow and develop. To qualify for inclusion in a VCT a company must meet certain criteria, including having assets of less than £10 million.

Smaller companies offer potentially high returns because they are flexible and, unlike huge bureaucratic organisations, are able to react quickly to change. The danger is there is a greater chance they will collapse.

TRUST WATCH

The manager of the two best performing VCTs to date, Pennine Fund Managers, has pushed back the closing date on its third offering, Pennine Downing AIMVCT and will now keep it open until May 12. As at January 31, the two existing trusts, Pennine I and Pennine II, had the highest published net-asset value of all VCTs launched so far. The net-asset value of both trusts was 95p at launch. By the end of January this year the net-asset value of shares in Pennine I, which was launched in April 1996, was 134.3p, a rise of 41.1 per cent, and the net-asset value of shares in Pennine II was 122.7p, a rise of 29.1 per cent since launch in April last year.

Before rushing out to take advantage of this offer, however, investors need to ask themselves whether they should be investing in VCTs at all and if so, should they choose this particular VCT?

VCTs are similar to investment trusts as they are quoted on the Stock Exchange and they invest in other companies with a view to making money for their investors. People can invest up to £100,000 per tax year and benefit from significant tax reliefs. The first is that they get 20 per cent income tax relief on the investment. So, if for example you invest £10,000 in a VCT, they will get a £2,000 rebate. This is claimed by sending off the tax certificate issued by the VCT to the tax inspector. It is worth noting that to receive the full tax rebate, you must have paid at least that amount of income tax in the year.

Until April next year there is no liability to either basic or higher rate tax on dividends. So if the dividend is, for example, 4.5p, 3.6p will be paid by the VCT and 0.9% can be reclaimed as a tax credit. After April 1999, it will no longer be possible to reclaim the tax credit but the investor will receive the net dividend and there will be no liability to higher rate tax. Also, capital gains can be distributed tax free. There are also two capital gains tax (CGT) reliefs. There is no liability to capital gains tax on growth in the value of the VCT shares, and investors who have made gains in any one tax year that exceed the £6,800 annual CGT exemption limit, can use VCTs to defer their liability. Up to £100,000 of the excess gain can be reinvested in a VCT (12 months before or after realising the gains) and the tax liability is then deferred until the VCT shares are eventually sold.

Although the potential rewards and tax advantages may sound attractive, VCTs are potentially high risk investments.

Some advisers say VCTs might be considered as an alternative to Peps, but many others would argue that there are significant differences. Unlike Peps which, on the whole, are broadly based, VCTs invest only in UK smaller companies, and must be held for five years.

While not agreeing that VCTs are comparable with Peps, the independent analyst BESt Investment does not believe VCTs should be regarded as high-risk, because they invest in a spread of at least 20 companies and around 25 per cent of the portfolio is invested in fixed-interest securities.

John Spiers, the chairman of BESt Investment said: "We believe the risk profile of VCTs is similar to some specialist investment trusts and only a little riskier than some smaller companies unit trusts."

Stephen Lundy, the managing director of financial advisers Berkeley Morgan, said: "In my view VCTs are suitable only for experienced equity investors, who already have a spread of investments and hav a taste for higher risk investments.

"Investors need to be able to tie their money up for five years. They are particularly suitable for higher rate taxpayers and those with chargeable gains."

Some time ago, financial advisers Chase de Vere took the decision not to offer advice to clients on VCTs because it considers them too risky.

In spite of the excellent performance delivered by Pennine Fund Managers so-far, it has a narrow investment-focus, investing only in companies quoted on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM). Although these are safer than unquoted companies they are often more more highly-valued so investors have to pay more.

Mr Spiers said: "We have some concerns about the concentrated nature of the portfolios. Pennine I has invested in just eight companies so far and Pennine II in only six and these six are the same ones in which Pennine I invests."

Another concern is that, Neilson Cobbold, which is part of the same group as Pennine Fund Managers, is stockbroker to several of the companies that the VCTs have invested in so far. This is good in one respect because the Pennine Fund Managers inevitably know and understand the companies very well. The concern is that, as more money is raised, Pennine will have to invest in a wider range of companies that it does not know so well.

Also Pennine I and II have still not invested all the money they raised. Depending on how much the third trust raises, there could be up to £10 million more to invest. Mr Spiers said: "There should be no difficulty in investing these funds but Pennine may have to be less selective than it has been in the past which may have implications for future performance."

There is no doubt that VCTs offer tremendous tax advantages and potentially high rewards. But they are a specialist area and investors who are thinking about investing in one should consider seeking the advice of a financial adviser who has a thorough knowledge of this area.

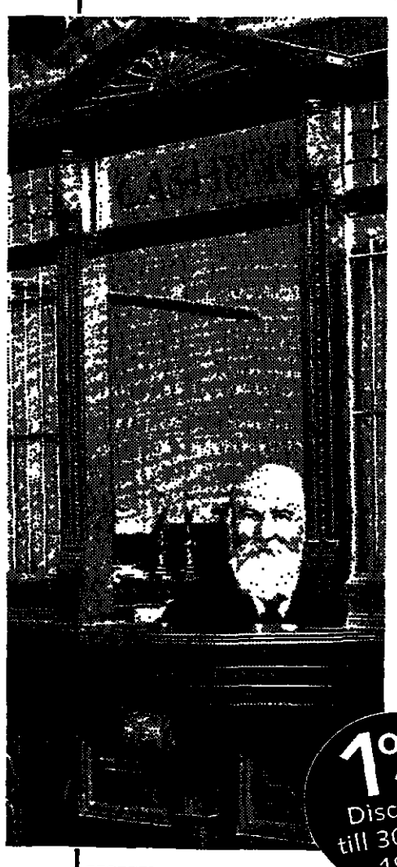
Score: ★★★

Products graded from ★ (poor), to ★★★★★ (outstanding).

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* Source: Micropal, offer to bid, net income reinvested to 1 April 1998. Launch date 13 October 1986. Issued by Framlington Unit Management Limited, member of the Framlington Marketing Group. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. Member of AUTIF. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. Changes in exchange rates will affect the value of the Fund's overseas investments. Investment in single sector funds offers the possibility of higher returns but may also involve a higher degree of risk. The Government has announced that from 1999 tax advantaged schemes, such as PEPs and TESSAs, will be replaced with a new Individual Savings Account (ISA). PEP investments made prior to this date will have the same tax advantages as ISAs, including the right to 10% tax credit until 5 April 2004.

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هكذا من الأصل

When Tessa throws caution to the wind

HIT OR MISS

Clare Stewart examines an innovative product that is neither fish nor fowl

The stock market in 1998 has soared to new heights while stocks of Tessas have been running down before they are replaced by the individual savings account (Isa) next year.

Now is the time to offer eager investors the best of both worlds. So presumably runs the thinking behind the recent launch by the Birmingham Midshires Building Society of an equity-linked Tessa.

The new account offers tax-free returns of up to 80 per cent of the growth of the FTSE 100 index — the index of the leading 100 companies — over a five-year period. Should the market fall back, there is a guaranteed total return of 10 per cent.

Investors need £9,000 to open the account, which is available for both first-time and follow-on Tessas. However, carpetbaggers need not apply. With Birmingham Midshires under siege from rival bidders Halifax and Royal Bank of Scotland, while also contemplating the option of a stock market flotation, new Tessa customers will not receive membership rights and so will not be in line for any future windfall payments that may arise when the dust finally settles.

"This type of Tessa offers investors the chance to boost their potential return with no risk to their capital," says David Taylor, head of investing products at Birmingham Midshires. "Investors looking for something a bit different with the potential for big returns will find this a very attractive product."

While there is no question that investors' capital is at risk, independent financial advisers are less convinced by the earning potential of the equity-linked Tessa.

A key stumbling block would seem to be the wisdom of getting into the FTSE 100 at this time. While it has had a strong run and already broken through the levels forecast for the year end, there is the inevitable question of how much higher the leading companies will go, with some City analysts expecting investors to switch their attentions to the value offered by medium-sized and smaller quoted companies.

"I do have a problem with something that is linked to the FTSE 100 index — I would prefer to see it linked to the performance of the FTSE all-share index," said Mike Neumann at BESt Investment.

The level of guarantee is also fairly unimpressive. Ten per cent over five years is, said one adviser, not worth bothering with, not least when it compares with annual rates of 7-8 per cent now available with ordinary Tessas.

Although the product offers the attraction of tax-free gains based on the stock market, a number of advisers queried how well Tessas and equities sit together. "If you want to want to go into equities, then go into them; if not, go into some more traditional type of vehicle," said Martha Catterall from City Independent Financial Planning.

An equity Tessa, she added, is "a confusing hybrid", with fewer guarantees than an ordinary Tessa. "If you want to tie up money in equities then you might as well go for 100 per cent return, not 80 per cent," said James Higgins at Chamberlain de Broë. In which case, he suggests a Pep or perhaps a tracker fund as a better option.

"If Tessas are going to be part of your overall financial planning, then use them for what they are — cautious investment vehicles," said Martha Catterall.

A strong stock market over the next five years led by the FTSE 100 could, of course, deliver some of the promise of the equity-linked Tessa, but investors need to think carefully about locking up their money.

While conventional Tessas do allow withdrawal of money from accounts subject to notice and some loss of interest, no access is possible to withdraw cash from an equity-linked Tessa account.

There is a 14-day cooling-off period, however, if investors change their minds after having opened the account. For first-time Tessas, the first £3,000 is invested immediately while the remaining £6,000 is held in a feeder account and transferred annually. From next April savers will be able to transfer the capital of existing Tessas into the new Isas, on top of the annual £5,000 investment limit per person.

Score: ★
Products graded from ★ (poor) to ★★★★★ (outstanding).

TRUST WATCH

Thomson takes-off

Discounts on holidays have lured investors, writes **Marianne Curphey**

TONY WHITE



Shooting Star Ulrika Jonsson made the Thomson Founders Club launch go with a bang

Several hundred thousand private investors have registered their interest in the flotation of Thomson Travel Group (TTG), the tour operating arm of the giant Thomson Corporation of Canada, after being lured by the offer of a 10 per cent discount on all future Thomson holidays.

TTG is unsure how many of these actually intend to buy shares, but up to 10 per cent of the total global offer has been earmarked for individual investors, and the quota can be increased if demand is extremely high.

Many investors will have been lured by the carrot of a 10 per cent discount on all Thomson and Skytours brochured holidays for as long as the shares are held. TTG said this week that it did not know what effect the threatened industrial action by pilots at Britannia, the charter airline it owns, would have on the flotation.

Anyone who subscribes for shares in the flotation will automatically become a member of the Founders Club. This guarantees them and anyone else travelling in their party a 10 per cent discount on holidays booked after September and taken after May next year.

However, all holidays have to be booked via the Founders Club telephone line, which precludes investors from taking advantage of any special offers or discounts available from high street travel agents, including TTG's own agent, Lunn Poly. A spokesman for the company defended this by saying that, unlike seasonal discounts, the Founders Club discount was guaranteed.

He said: "If you buy a brochured holiday worth £1,000 you will only have to pay £900. If a new brochure is published with the same holiday costing only £800, then you will receive 10 per cent off the new price instead."

The tour group, which will be officially listed on the London Stock Exchange on May 18, unveiled other perks available to members of the Founders Club. These include a 10 per cent reduction on the brochure price of all holidays provided by Holiday Cottages Group; airline seat upgrades when using aircraft owned by Britannia, TTG's airline; best room allocation where available; and additional luggage allowance when using Britannia aircraft.

TTG has been valued between £1.4 billion and £1.7 billion by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, TTG's adviser. This is 23 per cent more than analysts' forecasts last month and £600 million more than original estimates. The executive directors will share in a generous incentive scheme, which rewards them if TTG's earnings per share rise by more than 3 per cent above the retail prices index every year for three years.

A total of one billion shares will be in issue after the flotation, priced at between 140p and 170p per share. Small investors must apply by 12 noon on May 7; institutions by 5.30pm on May 8. Ten per cent of the issue has been earmarked for the retail market. The final offer price and the amount of shares which each individual will receive will be announced on May 11, and conditional dealings will begin on May 11, with full listing of shares on May 18.

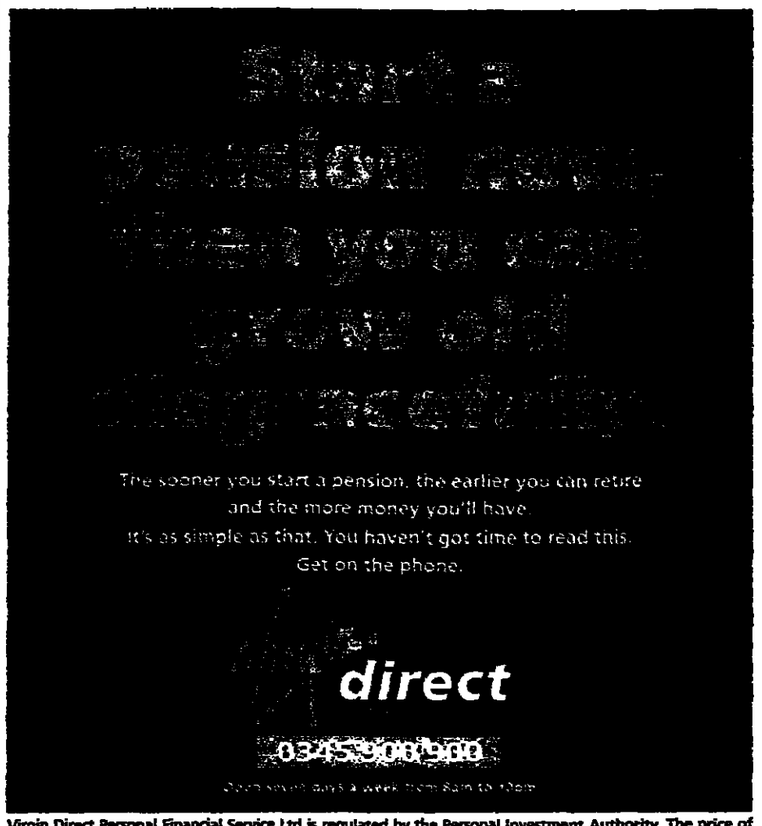
The Thomson Corporation will sell all TTG's issued share capital but the Thomson family has pledged to buy between 13.5 per cent and 20 per cent and hold the shares until at least June 30, 1999.

Investors who want to buy shares under the retail offer (also known as the intermediaries offer) are being urged to register with one of the designated share shops. These are: Barclays Stockbrokers (0800-400 401); Hargreaves Lansdown (0500-404 055); NatWest Stockbrokers (0800-210 217); Skipton Building Society (0800-138 0800); and the Share Centre (0500-441 144).

Brokers believe that shares in TTG are likely to be a good stock to hold long term and will offer steady growth rather than instant riches.

Michael Erlick, of the private client broker S.P. Angel & Co in London, said he believed that the share price would initially be sluggish, but would pick up after a year or so, although he added: "If the market falls, the shares will look quite expensive."

Nevertheless, he believes that growing demand for holidays and TTG's good track record are persuasive arguments to investment. "TTG has an excellent track record and its airline is one of the most punctual charter airlines, according to a recent report. The issue will probably be quite heavily subscribed." Some observers, however, say TTG is a mature company without the potential for rapid growth and that margins will be under pressure constantly because the travel industry is a highly competitive business.



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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Beat the Budget insurance levy

Holidaymakers are advised to buy their travel insurance before August 1 when Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) will rise from 4 per cent to 17.5 per cent. This was announced by the Chancellor in his Budget last month and will affect all travel insurers. According to Help the Aged Insurance Services, which offers lower premiums for older people, travellers should act quickly. As well as offering an annual, unlimited travel policy, Help the Aged now has an Extended-Stay policy which offers cover for up to six months. Call 0800-413 180.

The reality of fines, interest payments and surcharges has brought into focus the changed responsibilities which are fundamental to the self-assessment system. A computer package, *TaxCalc 98*, produced by the Consumers Association, has been designed to take the hard work out of the Inland Revenue's tax return. By keying in your income details, the software will calculate your tax liabilities and provide the basis for a claim for a refund if appropriate. More than 40 tax saving tips are included. *TaxCalc 98* is being offered to *Times* readers at a reduced price of £24.99 plus £2 postage & packing. Call 0990-084 201 quoting reference TT/25.

Detailed coverage of the Government's New Deal programme, and changes to benefits for lone parents, is included in three authorative guides to the benefits system which have been updated for 1998. Income support, the social fund and disability working allowance is discussed in the *National Welfare Benefits Handbook*. Information on maternity pay, pensions, statutory sick pay, and the latest incapacity benefit developments is provided in the *Rights Guide to Non-Means-Tested Benefits*. The Government's welfare-to-work strategy is examined in *The Jobseeker's Allowance Handbook*. The books are £8.95 each, including p&p (£3 to benefit claimants). Send a cheque to CPAG Ltd, 1-5 Bath Street, London EC1V 9PY.

Copies of *Property Investor*, featured in last week's piece on buying property to let, are available from Cambridge Titles (01223 847799) priced at £12.99.

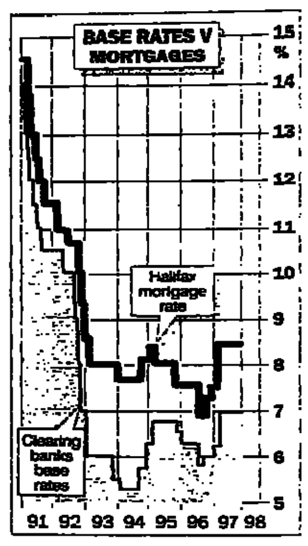
LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Standard Life Bank 0345 555657	Direct Access	InstantT	£1	6.96	Yly
Scottish Widows Bank 0645 8450829	Instant Access	InstantB	£100	7.00	Yly
Safeway 0800 995995	Direct Savings	InstantB	£1,000	7.30	Yly
Northern Rock 0845 600 6767	Save Direct Inst	InstantB	£5,000	7.80	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Scarborough BS 01723 500616	Scarborough 30	30 day	£1,000	7.60	Yly
Stroud & Swindon BS 0345 252423	Direct Thirty	30 day B	£10,000	8.00	Yly
Legal & General Bank 0500 111200	60 Direct 4	60 day B	£10,000	8.00	Yly
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 203 1650	Base Plus	1 year	£2,001	8.00	Yly

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Norwich & Peterborough 01733 372222		5 year	£100	8.00	Yly
Bradford & Bingley BS 0800 592588		5 year	£500	8.00	Yly
Darlington BS 01325 366366		5 year	£1,000	8.00	Yly
Sun Bank 01438 744505		5 year	£1,000	8.00	Yly



CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.57%N	6.90%N	Nil
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.69%NC	8.60%N	Nil

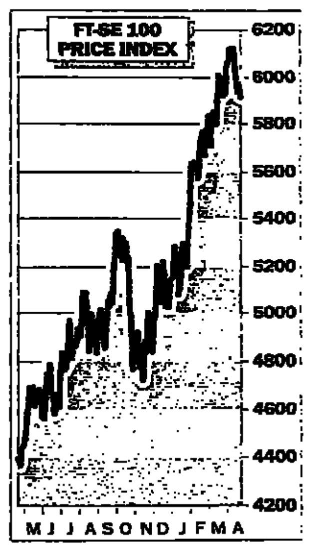
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock 0345 421421	9.90%H	£183.13	£166.11
Yorkshire Bank 0800 202122	12.50%	£190.33	£165.77
Direct Line 0181 680 9966	12.80%A	£183.75	£166.38

NB. A = Minimum age 22 years, B = Operated by post or telephone, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate, H = If insurance not arranged APR 12.7 per cent, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, P = Operated by Post, T = Operated by Telephone.

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)



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	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c¹	2.00	1.60	1.20	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*₆	4.75	3.80	2.85	1-499**	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*₆	7.00	5.60	4.20	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond₄	6.50	5.20	3.90	1,000-250,000**		0645 645000
46th Issue Cert†₃	4.80			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.00			25-1,000	8day	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bond₆	6.00	4.80	3.60	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
13th Ind Linked†₃	2.25			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S5₆	6.10	4.88	3.66	500-50,000₅	60day	0645 645000

¹ first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, first accs for up to £100 ² Unlimited additional hldgs for reinvested proceeds †Tax free *Rates gross and vble ₃Guaranteed when held for 5 years ₄0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ ₅£100,000 jt in addition to S1, S2, S3 and S4 holdings ₆Taxable but cred in full ₇£500-100,000 earn higher rates **Tiered rates apply

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Commercial Un....Level	£ 8,322	£ 9,632	£11,362
Legal & General...Level	£ 8,520	£ 9,563	£10,879
Equitable Life ......Level	£ 8,512	£ 9,531	£10,928
Canada Life ....Level	£ 8,418	£ 9,511	£10,997
Standard Life ....Level	£ 8,336	£ 9,440	£10,880

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Canada Life ....Level	£7,753	£ 8,595	£ 9,808
Generali ....Level	£7,809	£ 8,557	£ 9,634
Equitable Life.......Level	£7,810	£ 8,552	£ 9,622
Commercial Un....Level	£7,392	£ 8,412	£ 9,792
Norwich Union.....Level	£7,646	£ 8,403	£ 9,621

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 / Female: Age 55	Age 65 / Age 60	Age 70 / Age 65
Equitable Life.......Level	£7,435	£8,021	£ 8,842
Generali ....Level	£7,357	£7,918	£ 8,702
Prudential ....Level	£7,309	£7,832	£ 8,603
Legal & General...Level	£7,254	£7,827	£ 8,629
Norwich Union.....Level	£7,213	£7,779	£ 8,523

Source: Annuity Direct (0171 684 5000)

Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at April 24, 1998

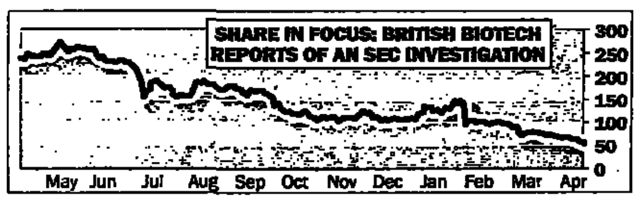
	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	4.75
	5,000	AIG Life	6.22
	10,000	GE Fin Assur	6.50
2 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.30
	3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	5.95
	5,000	GE Fin Assur	6.10
	10,000	GE Fin Assur	6.32
3 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.45
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	6.00
	20,000	GE Fin Assur	6.08
	50,000	Hambro Assured	6.15
4 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.25
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	5.90
5 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.15
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	5.75

Source: Chamberlain de Broé 0171-493 7900. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	131.25	7.14	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	161.25	7.21	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	178.25	7.29	100.20	10,000
Britannia	13.000%	181.75	7.15	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	172.25	7.04	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	162.00	7.25	100.25	10,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	191.25	6.99	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	156.25	6.88	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	182.75	6.91	100.45	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	189.00	6.81	100.48	1,000
PERPETUAL SUBORDINATED BONDS					
Chelt & Gloucester	11.750%	166.00	7.08	100.98	50,000
Halifax	8.750%	119.25	7.34	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	156.00	7.69	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.630%	191.75	7.11	100.00	50,000
Bristol & West	13.380%	184.25	7.26	100.34	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	174.25	7.25	100.14	1,000

PIBS=Permanent interest-bearing shares. *Source* Greenwich NatWest



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Bank of Scotland 0645 812812	0.00	any	95	0% for 2 mths, 2% disc 10 mths
Bank of Ireland 01189 684300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fixed 6 mths More dscs,£280 fee
Northern Rock¹ 0845 6050500	3.89	to £250k	95	Fixed to 1.9.00 £395 fee
Alliance & Leic 0345 108108	4.90	£20-300k	75	Fixed to 1.5.00 0.5% fee, £300 max
Halifax 01422 333333	4.95	no max	90	Fixed to 31.8.00 £295 fee

NB. ¹ compulsory products, buildings and contents insurance.

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Bank of Scotland 0645 812812	0.00	any	95	0% for 2 mths, 2% disc 10 mths
Scarborough 0990 133149	0.05	to £150k	95	Fixed for 1 yr 0.75% loan fee
Hinckley & Rugby 0800 774499	0.10	£1-150k	80	8.54% dsc-1 yr £250 fee
Mansfield 01246 202055	0.50	£25-175k	95	8% disc-6 mths, more dscs apply
Bank of Ireland 0118 9684300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fixed 6 mths, more dscs, £280 fee

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Bank of Ireland 01189 684300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fixed for 6 mths, more dscs,£280 fee
Bristol & West 0800 119955	3.49	no max	95	Fix to 1.4.99 £295 fee
Wesleyan Hm Lns 0121 2003003	5.35	to £100k	95	3.25% disc-12 mths
Halifax 01422 333333	5.65	any	95	Fixed to 31.8.00, £195 fee
Alliance & Leic¹ 0345 108108	5.85	£20-300k	95	Fixed to 1.5.00 £150 fee

NB. ¹ Compulsory products, buildings and contents insurance
Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides Ltd. (01753 880482).

Up to 7.60% gross p.a. for six months.
The bond that hits you for six.
CALL FREE 24 HRS QUOTE REF. J2504S
0800 20 21 21 BRISTOL & WEST
http://www.bristol-west.co.uk
We specialise in mortgages, savings, investments and nothing else.
Fixed for Six Bond (Issue 6) minimum balance £5,000. 7.60% gross p.a. paid on investments of £25,000+. No withdrawals permitted. Interest paid on maturity. Bristol & West plc. Registered in England No. 2124201. Registered Office: PO Box 27, Broad Quay, Bristol, BS99 7AX.

UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AEGON LIFE ASSURANCE Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh. EH12 9SE 0131 339 9191				
Balanced	620.00	656.10	- 3.50	...
UK Equity	880.40	931.70	-11.40	...
Property	482.80	511.00	+ 3.20	...
Fixed Interest	375.60	397.50	+ 1.40	...
Money	286.60	303.30	+ 0.20	...
International	514.30	544.30	+ 9.30	...
ABBEY LIFE Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8AL 01202 292373				
Custodian S4	230.90	243.10	- 0.10	...
Ethical S4	201.60	212.30	- 1.70	...
International S4	243.10	255.90	+ 1.70	...
Protected Gth S4	135.40	142.60	...	0.00
Asian Pacific	155.20	163.40	+ 0.10	...
European S4	317.50	334.30	+ 2.50	...
Prop Fd Ser 4	463.00	487.40	+ 0.30	...
Equity Ser 4	350.70	369.20	- 1.10	...
Man Ser 4	942.60	992.30	+ 1.40	...
Conv Ser 4	376.50	396.40	+ 0.60	...
Money Ser 4	376.10	395.90	+ 0.50	...
Fixed Int Ser 4	463.20	487.60	- 2.00	...
American Ser 4	928.80	977.70	+12.10	...
High Inc Ser 4	1091.20	1148.70	- 6.40	...
Indexed Inv Ser 4	268.00	282.20	- 0.40	...
Japan Ser 4	240.70	253.40	+11.30	...
Formerly Hill Samuel Life Assurance Ltd				
Security Fund	893.40	945.40	- 0.30	
British Fund	958.30	1014.10	-13.00	..
International	796.80	843.20	+ 4.10	..
Dollar Fund	769.50	814.30	+20.50	..
Capital Fund	747.20	790.70	- 6.50	..
Income Fund	1188.00	1257.20	-16.70	..
Property Series A	589.10	623.40	..	4.70
Property Units	985.90	1035.20		
Financial Fund	1188.60	1257.80	-32.10	..
Managed Ser A	817.30	864.90	- 5.20	..
Managed Units	1480.80	1558.80	- 9.40	..
High Yield Fund	1067.60	1129.80	-13.30	..
Money Series A	332.60	352.00	+ 0.30	..
Money Units	446.70	470.30	- 0.70	..
Equity Fund	953.90	1009.50	- 6.80	..
Fixed Interest	494.60	523.60	- 1.50	..
Indexed Secs	231.30	244.80	- 0.30	..
European Fund	1296.80	1372.30	+ 2.50	..
Natural Res	273.40	289.40	+12.00	..
Far East Fund	467.70	495.00	+ 6.10	..
Smaller Cos	774.30	819.40	+ 1.60	..
Special Sits	863.70	914.00	+ 4.00	..
Man Currency	297.80	315.20	+ 0.80	..
Japanese Tech	236.90	250.70	+ 7.80	..
US Smaller Cos	566.70	599.70	+ 6.70	..
Formerly Target Life Assurance Co Ltd				
Deposit	283.40	298.40	+ 0.40	..
Financial Ser 1	97.90	103.10	- 2.60	..
Fixed Interest	417.60	439.60	- 1.50	..
Gold	70.80	74.60	+ 3.90	..
Managed	895.30	942.50	- 5.30	..
Mngd Growth	288.00	303.20	- 2.00	..
Property	399.50	420.60		..
Residential Prop	126.00	132.70		..
TSB American	437.30	460.40	+10.40	..
TSB Brit Gwth	1463.70	1540.80	-27.00	..
TSB European	475.60	500.70	+ 0.50	..
TSB Income	684.50	720.60	- 9.70	..
TSB Intl	602.30	634.00	+ 2.70	..
TSB Pacific	323.80	340.90	+ 3.20	..
ALLIED DUNBAR ASSURANCE Swindon SN1 1EL 01793 514514				
Fxd Int Dep Acc	430.10	452.80	+ 0.80	..
Equity Acc	2159.30	2273.00	-16.30	..
Property Acc	783.70	825.00	+ 1.00	..
Far East Acc	246.30	259.30	+ 2.30	..
Managed Capital	735.20	773.90	- 4.60	..
-do- Acc	1617.80	1703.00	- 9.50	..
Overseas Acc	1596.40	1680.50	-18.10	..
Gilt Edged Acc	656.20	690.80	- 4.60	..
Amer Equity Acc	1539.30	1620.40	+38.00	..
Amer Man Acc	635.40	668.90	+13.80	..
Amer Prop Acc	130.70	137.60	- 1.00	..
Distribution Bonds	29.30	30.90	- 0.10	..
AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE ASSURANCE Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Bucks 01494 463463				
Reserve Ser 6	194.00	204.30	...	...
Balced Ser 6	1073.00	1129.50	- 5.40	..
Opportunity Ser 6	254.80	268.30	- 0.30	..
Distribution Ser 6	115.40	124.70	- 0.80	5.91
UK Equities Ser 6	1679.20	1767.60	-21.90	..
Higher Inc Ser 6	1798.00	1892.70	-29.90	..
North Amer Ser 6	758.60	798.60	-13.70	..
Far East Ser 6	448.30	471.90	- 9.80	..
Europe Ser 6	700.00	736.90	- 2.80	..
Intnl Ser 6	788.30	829.70	+ 5.00	..
Property Ser 6	643.70	677.60	+ 1.30	..
Fixed Int Ser 6	553.70	582.90	- 1.50	..
Ind-Lnkd Sec S6	230.00	242.20	- 0.20	..
Gteed Dep Ser 6	342.50	360.60	+ 0.30	..
BARCLAYS LIFE 252 Romford Road, London E7 9JB 0181 534 5544				
Equity Acc	1453.20	1529.70	-13.80	..
-do- Initial	854.00	899.00	- 8.10	..
Gilt Edged Acc	520.00	547.40	- 2.00	..
-do- Initial	308.20	324.50	- 1.20	..
International Acc	523.30	550.90	+ 5.50	..
-do- Initial	308.30	324.60	- 3.30	..
Managed Acc	789.50	830.10	- 1.20	..
-do- Initial	466.10	490.70	- 0.70	..
Money Acc	334.00	351.60	+ 0.40	..
Property Acc	358.60	377.50	+ 0.40	...
-do- Initial	212.30	223.50	+ 0.20	..
America Acc	549.20	578.20	-11.90	..
Far East Gwth	161.90	170.50	- 1.30	..
Financial Acc	665.60	700.70	- 9.60	..
500 Accum	629.70	662.90	+ 5.60	..
Japan Acc	182.40	192.00	- 9.60	..
Income Acc	848.40	893.10	- 4.60	..
Special Sits Acc	449.70	473.40	- 5.90	..
Univ Tech Acc	222.60	234.40	+ 1.60	..

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
BLACK HORSE LIFE Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent ME4 4JF 01634 834000				
The Managed Fd	1200.38	1200.38	- 2.39	...
Income Fund	1234.30	1299.27	-11.52	...
Extra Income	1118.18	1177.04	- 9.11	...
Worldwide Gth	696.42	733.08	+ 5.19	...
Balanced Fund	1084.81	1141.91	-12.98	...
Smllr Cos Recov	1210.33	1274.04	- 0.39	...
N Amer & Genrl	656.30	690.85	+17.95	...
Pacific Basin	285.65	300.69	- 2.01	...
German Growth	390.58	411.14	+ 6.29	...
Japan Growth	128.15	134.90	+ 2.64	...
The UK Gth Fd	352.31	370.86	- 3.70	...
Contl Euro Gth	234.51	246.86	+ 4.32	...
Property Fund	464.20	488.64	+ 0.67	...
Fixed Interest	434.37	457.24	- 2.01	...
Cash Fund	323.94	340.99	+ 0.11	...
Managed Inv	708.51	745.80	- 1.79	...
Nth Amer Recov	402.84	424.05	+ 1.79	...
BRITANNIA 50 Bothwell St, Glasgow G2 6HR 0141 248 2000				
Measured Perf	250.30	264.80	- 0.20	...
Performance Plus	296.30	313.90	+ 1.20	...
With Profit Perf	203.90	215.70	+ 0.30	...
UK Opportunity	344.00	363.90	- 2.30	...
Euro Opportunity	382.20	404.40	- 3.60	...
North Amer Opp	331.30	350.60	+ 8.50	...
Far East Opp	174.60	184.80	+ 3.00	...
Gwth Prop Ser 1	187.40	197.20		...
Gth Prop Ser 2	248.20	262.60	+ 0.10	...
Fixed Int	268.10	283.60	- 1.10	...
Cash	181.70	192.20	+ 0.40	6.49
Overseas	341.50	361.30	+ 1.40	..
Formerly LAS				
Managed Fund	524.30	551.90	- 0.40	...
UK Equity	1040.50	1095.30	- 7.00	...
Property	342.60	360.70	+ 0.20	...
Money Market	287.90	303.10	+ 0.60	...
Fixed Interest	389.50	410.00	- 1.50	...
Japan	260.20	273.90	+10.50	...
North America	294.80	310.40	+ 7.50	...
International	527.70	555.50	+ 2.20	...
European	488.80	514.60	- 4.60	...
Far East	129.30	136.20	+ 1.50	.
CANADA LIFE 24 High Street, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5BA 01707 51122				
Managed	490.00	515.80	- 3.10	...
Property	318.50	335.30	+ 0.20	...
Gilt & Fxd Int	309.10	325.40	- 0.40	...
Equity	627.10	660.20	- 8.40	...
Cash	245.10	258.10	+ 0.20	...
CLife Euro Mgd	617.20	649.70	+ 0.20	...
CLife Intl Fd	413.20	435.00	+ 4.60	...
Managed Fund	1046.00	1101.10	- 6.60	...
Property Fund	638.90	672.50	+ 0.70	...
Equity Fund	1547.70	1629.20	-20.60	...
Gilt Edged Fd	797.30	839.30	- 2.10	...
Deposit Fund	378.40	398.30	+ 0.40	...
Investment Fd	700.40	735.40	- 6.20	...
International	657.60	692.20	+ 7.30	...
Formerly Albany Life				
UK Equity	2412.10	2539.00	-23.80	...
Merc European	685.30	721.30	+ 3.80	.
Merc Fxd Int	654.00	688.40	- 3.70	...
Gtd Money	382.50	402.60	+ 0.40	...
Mercury Intl Mgd	925.80	974.40	+15.20	
Merc Int Fxd Int	386.60	406.90	+ 1.60	...
Mercury Japan	199.40	209.80	+ 5.90	...
Merc Nth Amer	579.00	609.40	+14.50	..
UK Property	528.90	556.70	+ 0.60	...
Merc Multip Inv	1457.60	1534.30	- 4.60	...
CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE Sentry House, 500 Avebury Blvd, Milton Keynes MK9 2NU. 01908 606101				
Property Fund	214.00	225.80		
Managed Fund	960.90	1011.50	- 2.40	...
Equity Fund	618.20	650.80	- 5.00	..
CLERICAL MEDICAL/FIDELITY INVESTMENTS Narrow Plain, Bristol BS2 0JH. 0117 9290566				
Assurance Funds				
Sapphire Mixed	425.60	448.10	- 2.70	...
Ruby	230.90	243.10	+ 1.80	...
Emerald	180.40	189.90	- 0.30	...
Equity	539.70	568.20	- 8.10	...
Property	263.40	277.30	+ 0.10	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	270.20	284.50	- 1.10	...
Indexed Secs	213.30	224.60	- 0.20	...
Cash	214.20	225.50	+ 0.20	...
Nth American	433.60	456.50	+ 3.60	...
Far East	235.60	248.10	+ 6.40	...
International	320.40	337.20	+ 1.50	...
Special Sits	587.90	618.90	+ 4.60	...
Intl Income	309.30	336.20	- 5.20	...
European	612.20	644.50	+ 0.60	...
Japanese	95.00	100.10	+ 3.70	...
SE Asia	310.00	326.40	- 1.80	...
With Profits Reg	202.60	213.30	+ 0.30	...
-do- Spec	202.60	213.30	+ 0.20	...
Flexible Retirement Plans Funds				
Mixed	509.30	536.20	- 3.90	...
Equity	693.60	730.20	-12.00	...
Property	251.60	264.90	+ 0.40	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	360.40	379.40	- 1.80	...
Index Linked	232.10	244.40	- 0.30	...
Cash	299.50	315.30	+ 0.40	...
Nth American	549.10	578.10	+ 5.00	...
Far East	243.10	256.00	+ 8.40	...
International Acc	404.50	425.80	+ 2.80	...
Special Sits	902.50	950.10	-10.90	...
European Flex	919.20	967.60	+ 4.00	...
COLONIAL MUTUAL GROUP Colonial Mutual House, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4YY. 01634 890 000				
(Units): Key I	297.54	...	..	..
-do- Pacemaker I	471.44			
-do- Cash	229.84	241.94	+ 0.19	...
-do- Equity	867.52	913.18	-15.18	
-do- Fxd Int	465.90	490.42	+ 1.02	...
-do- Managed	598.58	630.08	- 8.49	...
-do- Property	473.08	497.98	- 0.13	...
(Pens). Cash Cap	221.80	233.49	- 0.13	

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
-do- Cash Inv	365.60	384.85	+ 0.47	...
-do- Equity Cap	2243.18	2361.25	- 4.52	...
-do- Equity Inv	3697.39	3892.00	- 4.83	...
-do- Fixed Cap	499.51	525.81	- 1.04	...
-do- Fixed Inv	823.34	866.69	- 1.12	...
-do- Index Cap	239.96	252.60	- 0.46	...
-do- Index Inv	395.53	416.36	- 0.47	...
-do- Mngd Cap	870.46	916.28	- 1.95	...
-do- Mngd Inv	1434.76	1510.29	- 2.30	...
COMMERCIAL UNION St Helen's, 1 Undershaft, EC3 0171 283 7500				
Var Ann Acc (5) I	1341.54	..	-27.04	...
Var Ann (5) I	142.33	..	- 2.55	...
Prime: Managed	594.80	626.20	- 3.40	...
Prime: UK Equity	821.00	864.30	-11.50	...
Prime: Int Equity	381.40	401.50	+ 3.80	...
Prime: Property	286.00	301.10	+ 0.30	...
Prime: Fxd Int	293.40	308.90	- 0.50	...
Prime Index-Lnk	212.50	223.70	- 0.20	...
Prime: Cash	235.30	247.70	+ 0.20	...
CONFEDERATION LIFE Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2NN 01438 744840				
Managed Fund	1629.00	1714.70	+16.70	...
Equity II	2616.10	2753.70	-14.50	...
EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE Montpellier Drive, Cheltenham, GL53 7LQ. 01242 221311				
Life Funds				
Ut Wth Pfts (5&6) I	121.80	...	+ 0.10	..
Secure (2) I	114.70	...	+ 0.10	..
Managed (3) I	142.50	...	- 0.60	...
Equity Mngd (3) I	143.40	...	- 0.60	...
Adventurous (3) I	130.60	..	+ 0.20	...
Bristol & West (2) I	117.00	...	+ 0.10	...
Equity Mgd S1	346.70	365.00	- 1.70	...
Managed S1	342.20	360.30	- 1.60	...
Adventurous S1	267.80	281.90	+ 0.30	...
Managed (2)	233.00	245.30	- 1.00	..
Eagle/Mid Uts	461.00	477.80	- 2.40	0.01
Pension Funds				
Unit With Pfts (5) I	123.20	...	+ 0.20	...
Secure (2) I	116.40	...	- 0.20	...
Managed (2) I	145.50	..	- 0.70	...
Equity Mngd (2) I	149.00	...	- 0.80	...
Adventurous (2) I	132.60	...	+ 0.30	...
Bristol & West (2) I	119.10	...	- 0.20	...
FRIENDS' PROVIDENT Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SH 01722 413366				
Managed	468.50	493.20	...	...
UK Equity	679.50	715.30	- 6.30	...
Stewardship	547.90	576.80	- 1.40	...
Overseas Equity	422.80	445.10	+ 3.90	...
North American	271.00	285.30	+ 6.70	...
Pacific Basin	120.70	127.10	+ 3.00	...
European	461.50	485.80	+ 5.90	...
Property	215.40	226.80	- 0.10	...
Fixed Interest	311.60	328.10	- 1.30	...
Index Linked	212.60	223.80	- 0.10	...
Cash	231.90	244.20	+ 0.30	...
FP Life Assurance ex NM				
Fixed Interest	684.70	720.70	- 5.50	.
Managed	1065.00	1121.00	- 0.60	...
Deposit	397.10	418.00	- 0.50	...
Property	599.60	631.10	- 0.50	
American	768.50	808.90	+21.30	
Australian	689.20	725.40	+ 1.70	.
European	1154.30	1215.00	+15.30	...
Income Acc	1246.10	1311.60	- 3.40	...
-do- Dist	674.80	710.30	- 2.00	3.97
International	454.40	478.30	+ 4.00	...
Japan Smaller	258.80	272.40	+ 8.00	...
Singapore & Mal	272.80	287.20	+ 3.40	...
Tokyo Fund	537.10	565.30	+21.30	...
UK Equity	952.20	1002.30	- 9.90	...
CCM Vangd Mg	1134.60	1194.30	- 1.30	...
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD Alban Gate, 14th Flr, 125 London Wall, Lond EC2Y 5AS. 0171 710 4567				
GT Plan Far East	234.90	247.30	+ 3.30	..
GT Plan Wwide	627.80	660.90	+ 4.40	..
GAN LIFE & PENSIONS Gan House, Harlow, Essex CM20 2EW. 01279 626262				
Portfolio Acc	915.40	915.40	- 3.10	...
-do- Inv A	915.30	963.60	- 3.20	...
UK Equity	641.70	675.60	- 2.20	...
Gilt Plus	252.40	265.60	- 0.80	..
Managed	419.50	441.70	+ 1.60	...
GENERAL ACCIDENT 2 Rougier St, York YO1 1HR. 01904 628982				
Managed	307.90	324.00	- 1.20	...
Unitised Profit	173.50	182.60	+ 0.30	...
Uk Equity	483.90	509.30	- 5.40	...
Fixed Int	247.70	260.60	- 0.90	...
Index-Linked	205.40	216.10	- 0.30	...
Cash Deposit	199.10	209.50	+ 0.20	...
Property	211.80	222.90	- 0.30	...
International	240.20	252.70	- 0.70	...
American	309.10	325.20	+ 6.70	...
Japan	172.40	181.40	+ 7.60	...
Japan Smllr Cos	176.60	185.70	+ 7.80	...
European	307.70	323.70	- 2.30	...
Pacific Fund	196.80	207.00	+ 1.10	...
Conv Life	201.10	211.60	+ 0.60	
Formerly Provident Mutual				
Managed Ord	703.70	740.70	- 2.90	...
Managed Initial	425.10	447.50	- 1.90	...
Equity Ord	1224.30	1288.70	-13.50	...
Equity Init	739.90	778.40	- 8.70	...
I-Linked Gilt Ord	250.60	263.80	- 0.30	..
I-Linked Gilt Init	158.10	166.40	- 0.30	
Oseas Equity Ord	485.60	511.20	+ 5.10	...
Oseas Equity Init	293.30	308.70	+ 2.80	...
Property Ord	329.20	346.50	+ 0.40	...
Property Init	199.80	209.30	+ 0.10	...
Fixed Int Ord	362.50	381.60	- 1.10	...
Fixed Int Init	218.90	230.40	- 1.00	...
Deposit Ord	237.60	250.10	+ 0.20	...
Deposit Initial	143.50	151.10	..	..

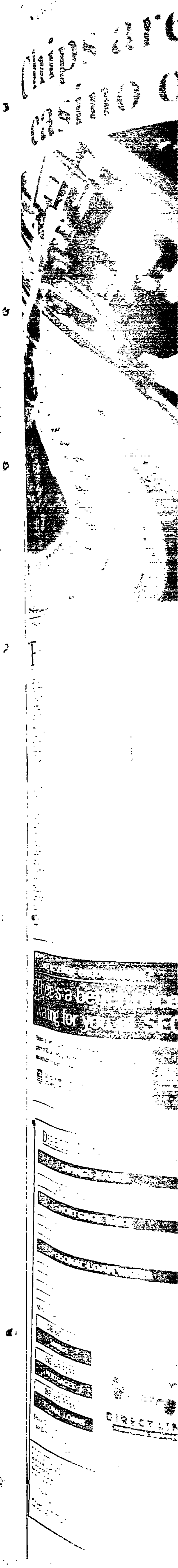
	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE Royal Exchange London EC3. 0171 283 7101				
Ass Prop Bds	993.80	1035.20	...	...
Managed Initial	647.00	681.10	- 2.20	...
-do- Acc	991.40	1043.60	- 3.30	...
Equity Initial	1093.30	1150.90	-11.50	...
-do- Acc	1675.30	1763.40	-17.70	..
Fixed Int Initial	537.40	565.70	- 1.60	...
-do- Acc	823.40	866.80	- 2.50	...
Intl Initial	564.80	594.50	+ 7.20	...
-do- Acc	865.40	910.90	+11.00	...
Nth Amer Initial	333.10	350.60	+ 8.10	...
-do- Acc	464.50	488.90	+11.30	...
Pacific Initial	150.10	158.00	+ 5.20	...
-do- Acc	207.30	218.30	+ 7.10	...
Property Initial	204.90	215.70	...	...
-do- Acc	313.90	330.40	...	...
Index-Lnkd Inti	189.00	199.00	- 0.30	...
-do- Acc	263.60	277.40	- 0.50	...
Deposit Initial	212.40	223.60	+ 0.20	...
-do- Acc	325.40	342.60	+ 0.40	...
Euro Initial	173.30	182.30	+ 1.60	...
-do- Acc	223.20	235.00	+ 2.10	...
HALIFAX LIFE LTD PO Box 285, York YO1 1YB 01904 611110				
Life Funds				
Foundation	38.06	40.06	- 0.09	..
Balanced	37.95	39.95	- 0.07	...
Opportunity	38.98	41.03	- 0.19	...
Deposit	27.16	28.59	+ 0.03	...
Pension Funds				
Foundation S2	30.31	31.91	- 0.03	...
Balanced S2	30.50	32.11	- 0.05	...
Opportunity S2	30.14	31.73	- 0.11	..
Deposit S2	25.68	27.03	+ 0.03	...
HAMBRO ASSURED Harbour House, Portway, Preston, Lancs PR2 2PR. 01772 848000				
Managed	252.00	265.30	- 0.80	.
-do- Pens	335.70	353.30	- 1.30	...
UK Equity	296.40	312.00	- 3.30	...
-do- Pens	378.40	398.30	- 5.00	...
International	195.80	206.10	+ 1.60	...
-do- Pens	222.20	233.90	- 2.30	...
Deposit	159.80	168.20	+ 0.10	...
-do- Pens	197.50	207.90	+ 0.30	...
For Hill Samuel see Abbey Life Assurance				
IRISH LIFE ASSURANCE Irish Life Centre, Victoria Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 5TF. 01727 48181				
Global Managed	859.50	904.70	- 9.90	
Global Property	359.30	378.20	...	..
Global Fixed Int	673.70	709.20	- 2.70	..
Global Equity	950.80	1000.80	-12.40	...
Global Cash	245.30	258.20	+ 0.20	..
LEGAL & GENERAL UNIT ASSURANCE 2 Montefiore Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 1SE 01273 524800				
B Soc Lnkd Init	134.80	141.90	...	..
-do- Acc	205.60	216.50	+ 0.10	..
Brit Opps Ini	223.20	235.00	- 1.90	...
-do- Acc	306.30	322.50	- 2.90	..
Cash Initial	174.20	183.40	+ 0.30	...
-do- Acc	331.50	349.00	+ 0.40	...
Equity Initial	1036.90	1091.50	-12.20	...
-do- Acc	1972.90	2076.80	-23.20	...
Fixed Initial	409.70	431.30	- 0.60	...
-do- Acc	779.50	820.60	- 1.20	..
Index-Lnkd Gilt	155.80	164.00	- 0.50	...
-do- Acc	253.00	266.40	- 0.50	...
Intl Initial	378.00	397.90	+ 2.70	...
-do- Acc	708.20	745.50	+ 5.10	...
Managed Initial	644.70	678.70	- 3.10	...
-do- Acc	1226.10	1291.40	- 6.00	...
Property Initial	242.80	255.60	+ 0.30	...
-do- Acc	462.00	486.40	+ 0.60	...
LINCOLN The Quays, 101-105 Oxford Road, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 1LZ 01895 200 200				
Equity Units	£220.60	...	-244.20	...
Property Units	3362.60	3539.50	+ 2.50	...
Bal Bd Exec Unit	9542.60	£100.40	-35.30	..
2nd Equity Acc	1038.10	1092.60	-11.40	...
2nd High Inc Ac	993.40	1045.60	- 7.40	...
2nd Property Acc	301.00	316.80	- 0.20	..
2nd Mngd 2 Acc	224.40	236.30	- 0.10	..
2nd Mngd 3 Acc	660.70	695.30	- 2.60	..
2nd Mngd 4 Acc	300.90	316.70	- 0.30	..
2nd Deposit Acc	324.80	341.80	+ 0.30	..
2nd Gilt Acc	389.70	410.10	- 1.20	...
2nd Amer Acc	1152.00	1212.50	-21.50	...
2nd Intl Mny Acc	248.60	261.50	+ 2.50	...
2nd Index Acc	254.80	268.10	- 0.30	...
2nd Far East Acc	253.60	266.90	+ 1.90	...
2nd Global Acc	203.20	213.90	+ 1.30	...
2nd Euro Acc	270.30	284.40	+ 1.00	...
2nd Japan Acc	112.90	118.80	+ 4.80	...
2nd Int Cr Bd Acc	177.30	186.50	+ 1.80	...
2nd Cap Gth Acc	192.90	203.00	- 0.50	..
ex-Laurentian				
Property	641.30	674.90	+ 0.40	..
Managed	593.90	625.00	- 2.30	...
American	685.70	721.70	+12.80	...
UK Equity Fd	753.70	793.30	- 9.90	...
Japan	124.40	130.80	+ 5.30	...
Index-Lkd	228.20	240.10	- 0.30	...
High Yield	1380.30	1452.90	-11.10	...
Money	461.40	485.60	+ 0.40	...
International	456.70	480.60	+ 3.30	...
Perpetual Active	433.60	456.30	+ 2.50	...
Growth Acc	928.60	977.40	- 3.60	...
Gilt Edged	553.00	580.90	- 1.80	..

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European	246.60	259.50	- 0.90	...
Far East	134.20	141.10	+ 1.00	...
LONDON LIFE Spectrum, Bond Street, Bristol. BS1 3AL 0117 984 7777				
Equity I	1479.20	...	- 6.70	...
Fixed Interest I	573.70	...	- 1.60	...
Property I	513.30	...	+ 0.70	...
Deposit I	341.30	...	+ 0.30	..
Mixed I	872.30	...	- 0.90	...
Indexed Stock I	282.20	...	- 0.70	...
International I	364.40	..	+ 2.40	...
Equity A I	341.60	...	- 1.50	...
Fixed Int A I	253.30	...	- 0.80	...
Property A I	224.60	...	+ 0.30	...
Deposit A I	199.70	...	+ 0.20	...
Mixed A I	285.40	...	- 0.20	...
Index Stock A I	220.00	...	- 0.50	...
International A I	220.40	...	+ 1.50	...
Equity P I	1330.20	...	- 7.30	...
Fixed Int P I	798.80	..	- 2.20	..
Property P I	393.70	..	+ 0.60	..
Deposit P I	413.40	...	+ 0.50	..
Mixed P I	849.80	...	- 0.90	...
Index Stock P I	326.80	...	- 0.50	...
International P I	437.10	..	+ 3.60	...
LONDON & MANCHESTER ASSCE Winslade Park, Exeter EX5 1DS. 01392 282456				
Inv Trust Cap I	716.80	..	+ 3.10	...
-do- Acc I	1395.60	...	+ 7.00	...
Property Cap I	140.60	...	...	..
-do- Acc I	260.70	...	+ 0.20	...
Fxd Interest Cap I	214.60	...	- 1.10	..
-do- Acc I	410.70	...	- 1.70	...
Equity Cap I	469.30	...	- 4.90	...
-do- Acc I	895.70	...	- 8.50	...
Internatl Cap I	273.30	...	+ 3.20	.
-do- Acc I	514.80	...	+ 6.80	...
Gtd Deposit Cap I	159.10		...	...
-do- Acc I	295.50	...	+ 0.30	7.20
Flexible Cap I	448.50	...	- 1.50	...
-do- Acc I	851.80	...	- 2.10	..
Moneymaker Fd I	638.30	...	- 1.40	...
Capital Growth I	2910.20	..	-17.20	...
M & G Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1FB 01245 266266				
Amer Bond Acc	730.90	767.60	+ 1.40	
Amer Rec Bond	860.50	903.60	+22.20	..
Am Smlr Cos Bd	356.30	374.20	+10.30	...
Australasia Bd	301.20	316.30	+ 7.80	...
Commodity Bond	350.30	367.90	+16.50	...
Deposit Bond Acc	414.20	435.00	+ 0.40	...
Equity Bond Acc	2289.30	2403.90	- 2.60	...
European Bd Acc	710.70	746.30	+ 5.20	...
Extra Yld Bd Acc	1248.50	1311.10	-19.10	...
Gilt Bond Acc	579.40	608.40	- 3.00	...
Gold Bond Acc	140.00	147.10	+ 8.30	..
High Yield Bond	505.90	531.30	- 5.10	...
Index-Lnk Gt Bd	258.00	271.00	- 0.20	..
International Bd	984.10	1033.40	+10.70	...
Japan Bond Acc	156.30	164.20	+ 5.90	...
Japan Sm Cos Ac	168.90	177.30	+ 3.20	...
Managed Bonds	1253.30	1316.10	+ 7.70	..
Prop Bond Acc	629.10	660.60	+ 0.30	..
Rec Bond Acc	1235.90	1297.80	-13.20	...
S East Asia Bd Acc	245.10	257.40	+ 1.40	...
MGM ASSURANCE MGM House, Heene Road, Worthing BN11 2DY. 01903 204631				
UK Equity	352.00	370.60	- 2.70	...
UK Equity Acc	559.00	588.50	- 3.90	..
Special Sits	148.30	156.20	- 0.90	..
Special Sits Acc	235.60	248.00	- 1.40	..
North American	296.00	311.60	+ 3.60	..
N American Acc	470.20	495.00	+ 6.10	...
Pacific Basin	263.60	277.50	+ 5.00	...
Pacific Basin Acc	418.70	440.80	+ 8.30	...
Fixed Interest	330.30	347.70	- 1.30	...
Fixed Interest Acc	525.30	553.00	- 1.50	.
Property	202.40	213.10	...	...
Property Acc	321.90	338.90	+ 0.30	...
Deposit	157.50	165.80	...	..
Deposit Acc	250.50	263.70	+ 0.30	
Managed	357.90	376.80	- 0.70	.
Managed Acc	523.70	551.30	- 0.60	.
MERCHANT INVESTORS St Bartholomews House, Lewins Mead Bristol BS1 2NH 0117 9266 366				
Property	490.20	516.00	+ 0.40	..
UK Equity	605.50	637.30	- 7.70	...
Gilt Edged	812.10	854.80	- 2.80	...
Interest Fund	461.30	485.50	+ 0.50	..
Managed Fd	695.00	731.50	+ 1.50	..
Intl Equity	791.20	832.80	+11.60	...
North American	362.90	382.00	+ 8.80	...
Far East	360.60	379.50	+ 5.90	...
Intl Currency	282.70	297.50	- 1.70	...
NPI 48 Gracechurch Street, London EC3P 3HH 0171 623 4200				
Managed	708.90	746.20	- 2.50	
UK Equity	1070.20	1126.50	-13.70	..
Overseas Equity	592.50	623.60	+ 5.50	..
Americas	672.30	707.60	+13.60	..
Far East	430.60	453.20	+ 5.50	..
Property	249.80	262.90		
Fixed Interest	505.30	531.80	- 1.50	..
Indexed Gilt	295.10	310.60	- 0.50	..
Deposit	250.50	263.60	+ 0.20	...
NAT WEST LIFE ASSCE LTD PO Box 886, Trinity Quay, Bristol BS99 5LJ 0117 940 4040				
Growth Mgd Pens	199.30	209.50	+ 0.80	..
NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY - Ex NUAM Funds PO Box 140, Norwich NR3 1PP 01603 622200				
Managed Fund	2241.60	2359.60	- 6.70	...
Equity Fund	5393.10	5676.90	-37.60	..
Property Fd	775.10	815.90	+ 0.70	..
Fixed Int Fd	795.70	837.60	- 4.40	..
Deposit Fund	407.40	428.80	+ 0.40	...
Intl Fund	350.20	368.60	+ 1.10	.

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
OLD MUTUAL 2 Bartley Way, Hook, Hants RG27 9XA 01256 768888				
Equity Fund Acc	468.90	494.70	- 5.80	...
Fxd Interest Acc	318.90	336.40	- 0.80	...
International Acc	342.80	361.70	+ 3.30	...
Managed Acc	314.30	331.60	- 2.20	...
Property Acc	231.20	243.90	+ 1.30	...
Money Acc	175.90	185.60	+ 0.10	...
Spec Mkt Acc	263.60	278.10	+ 0.30	...
Japan Equity Acc	77.60	81.90	+ 3.70	...
N Amer Acc	298.50	314.90	+10.10	...
Pacific Acc	99.60	105.10	+ 2.40	...
European Acc	349.30	368.50	+ 3.80	...
PEARL ASSURANCE The Pearl Centre, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6FY. 01733 470 470				
Inv Prop Dist	148.50	156.40	+ 0.20	...
Prop Acc (Gross)	383.80	404.10	+ 0.40	...
Inv Equity	2120.40	2232.10	-21.00	...
Inv Managed	1331.40	1401.50	- 0.60	...
Ret Managed	1562.20	1644.50	- 2.20	...
PRUDENTIAL Holborn Bars, London EC1N 2NH 01189 578334				
Managed	526.30	548.30	- 9.00	...
PRUDENTIAL INDIVIDUAL LIFE FDS 1 Stephen Street, London W1P 2AP 0171 548 3278				
Managed Fund	1181.00	1243.20	- 6.40	...
Equity Fund	2749.70	2894.50	-33.90	...
Intl Fund	844.60	889.10	+ 2.70	...
Fixed Interest	722.00	760.00	- 2.10	...
Property Fund	559.70	589.20	+ 0.50	...
Cash Fund	418.30	440.40	- 0.40	...
Pacific Basin	264.50	278.50	+ 6.80	.
N American Fd	521.10	548.60	+ 4.90	...
Euro Fund	532.80	560.90	- 1.80	...
Balanced Fund	232.70	245.00	- 1.20	...
Strategic Fund	263.30	277.20	- 4.40	..
ROYAL HERITAGE LIFE ASSURANCE Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough PE2 6GG. 01733 390000				
Mult Grow (45) I	1149.60	...	...	...
-do- Acc	603.40	635.20	...	...
Op Prop	573.00	603.20	...	..
Op Equity	1633.60	1719.60	-20.40	...
Op High Yield	778.60	819.60	- 3.10	...
Op Managed	1194.50	1257.40	- 1.40	..
Op Deposit	450.10	473.80	+ 0.40	...
Japan Smlr	119.80	126.10	+ 4.40	..
Managed Gth	405.70	427.00	+ 1.30	...
British	599.70	631.30	- 5.50	.
Global Bond	122.40	128.80	+ 0.40	.
Gold Share	61.10	64.30	- 1.00	..
Japan	253.70	267.00	+ 4.00	..
UK Smlr Cos	740.00	778.90	+23.80	...
Mngd Growth	674.70	710.20	- 3.40	..
ROYAL LIFE INSURANCE New Hall Place, Liverpool L69 3HS 0151 239 3000				
Royal Life Unit Linked				
Managed Fund	576.20	606.50	- 1.20	...
SAVE & PROSPER 16-22 Western Road, Romford, Essex RM1 3LB. 01708 766966				
Bal Inv Fund	108.80	115.20	...	1.88
Deposit Fund (2)	438.10	463.20	+ 0.50	7.12
Gilt Fund	683.80	722.30	- 2.10	7.05
Global Equity Fd	307.90	325.90	+ 5.70	..
Property Fund (46)	139.20	147.40	.	6.56
SCOTTISH AMICABLE 150 St Vincent Street, Glasgow 0141 248 2323				
Equity	978.30	1029.80	-11.20	..
Fixed Interest	469.30	494.10	- 1.40	...
Index-Linked	243.60	256.70	- 0.40	.
International	570.30	600.40	+ 4.80	
Property	359.30	378.30		...
Cash	261.10	274.90	+ 0.20	...
Managed	664.30	699.30	- 3.20	.
Cap Gteed Bd	204.20	214.90	- 2.70	
95% Safeguard	114.90	...	- 0.30	...
100% Safeguard	105.40	...	...	...
Wealth Pres Cap	120.30	...	- 0.90	...
Wealth Pres Inc	123.60	...	+14.00	...
BonusBond I	112.70	...	- 1.30	..
SCOTTISH EQUITABLE 28 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YF 0131 556 9101				
Cash	209.01	220.02	+ 0.30	..
Index-Linked	209.30	220.30	..	.
Fixed Interest	239.00	251.60	- 1.10	...
Mixed	386.80	407.20	+ 2.90	...
UK Equity	390.70	411.20	+ 2.10	...
International	363.50	382.70	+ 5.70	..
American	520.00	547.40	+14.10	.
Japan	178.30	187.70	+ 7.80	.
European	483.70	509.20	+ 4.60	..
Pacific	279.90	294.60	+ 2.90	...
Technology	690.70	727.10	+25.80	...
Frgn Bd/Crrcy	248.30	261.40	+ 2.20	.
SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS 19 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YE 0131 225 2211				
Property	272.00	286.40	+ 0.20	..
UK Equity	630.30	663.60	- 3.80	..
American	448.80	472.50	+11.40	...
Pacific	284.40	299.50	+ 8.00	.
European	785.90	827.40	- 6.90	..
Global Mgd	390.00	410.70	- 4.10	..
Fixed Interest	315.10	331.80	- 0.50	..

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Index Linked	253.10	266.50	- 0.20	...
Deposit	225.00	236.90	+ 0.20	...
Managed	426.70	449.30	- 0.10	...
Worldwide	144.50	152.30	+ 2.10	...
Pen Worldwide	157.60	166.00	+ 2.80	...
SCOTTISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE 109 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5HN 0141 248 6321				
Flex Fund (35)	2683.50	2766.50	...	...
Safety Fund	317.30	334.00	- 1.60	...
Growth Fund	350.50	369.00	- 2.60	...
Opportunity Fd	358.60	377.50	- 5.40	...
Cash Fund	199.60	210.20	+ 0.20	..
European Fund	617.40	649.90	- 6.80	...
Gilts & Fxd Int	273.60	288.10	- 1.30	...
Index-Linked Fd	230.90	243.10	- 0.20	...
International Fd	368.10	387.50	+ 1.40	...
North American	454.10	478.10	+10.10	
Property Fund	139.10	146.50	...	..
UK Equity	419.90	442.00	- 5.70	.
UK Smaller	355.30	374.10	+ 0.80	...
SCOTTISH PROVIDENT 6 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YA 0131 556 9181				
Mixed	408.40	430.00	+ 0.70	...
Equity	481.10	506.50	- 0.70	...
International	364.00	383.30	+ 4.50	...
Property	274.90	289.40	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Interest	331.00	348.50	- 0.50	...
Index Linked	232.60	244.90	- 0.40	...
Cash	212.00	223.20	+ 0.20	..
Formerly Prolific				
Bal Gwth Mngd	1209.10	1286.30	- 0.10	..
Cash Fund	386.80	407.60	+ 0.40	...
Property Fund	396.10	375.30	+ 0.40	..
Equity Fund	1225.10	1303.30	+10.90	...
Fxd Interest Fund	647.40	682.20	+ 0.30	...
International	514.80	547.70	+ 6.70	...
High Income	1224.70	1302.90	+ 0.10	...
Far East	457.60	486.90	- 8.40	..
North American	992.90	1056.30	+25.40	..
Special Sits	1097.80	1167.90	+ 1.90	...
Technology	1219.80	1297.70	+21.40	...
Extra Income Fd	657.30	699.30	- 3.80	...
Gilt Fund	564.60	600.70	+ 0.60	..
European	261.10	277.80	- 0.20	...
Adventurous Mg	293.40	309.20	- 2.60	..
Secure Mgd	210.40	221.80	- 0.30	..
Equity Inc Dist	172.10	181.40	- 0.50	4.20
Managed Dist	141.90	149.60	- 1.50	4.93
Henderson Investment Bonds				
UK Equity Fd	510.70	543.40	- 4.30	...
North America	615.70	655.00	+ 8.40	...
Far East Fund	441.10	469.30	+ 3.20	...
Global Managed	668.20	710.90	+ 1.10	...
Deposit Fund	260.80	274.60	+ 0.30	...
Prime Residential	149.50	157.40	...	...
European Fund	489.90	521.20	+ 6.40	.
Fixed Interest	64.40	68.50	+ 0.50	.
SCOTTISH WIDOWS PO Box 902, Edinburgh EH16 5BU 0131 655 6000				
Inv Pol 1	1565.60	1565.60	-30.80	3.36
Inv Pol 2	1410.90	1485.30	-29.20	...
Inv Pol 3	1325.90	1395.80	-27.40	.
Inv Cash	363.20	382.30	+ 0.50	..
Mixed Fund	668.20	703.40	- 5.20	..
Equity Fund	897.70	945.00	-14.70	..
Property Fund	317.10	333.90	+ 0.30	..
International Fd	620.50	653.30	+ 2.60	..
Fixed Interest Fd	497.90	524.20	- 1.40	..
Indexed Stock Fd	252.80	266.20	- 0.50	.
Cash Fund	264.30	278.30	+ 0.30	..
SKANDIA LIFE Skandia House, Portland Terrace, Southampton SO9 7BX 01703 334411				
Managed Acc	589.70	620.70	+ 1.60	
Equity Acc	812.10	854.80	- 3.40	..
International Acc	424.30	446.60	+ 2.90	..
Property	269.10	283.20	- 0.60	.
STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE CO Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2DH 0131 225 2552				
Cash	309.30	325.60	+ 0.30	...
Equity	1783.50	1877.40	-19.20	
European	262.50	276.40	+ 0.70	
Far East	142.40	149.90	+ 3.00	..
Fixed Interest	525.30	553.00	- 1.70	..
Index Linked	269.50	283.70	- 0.10	..
International	758.40	798.40	+ 4.90	..
Managed	1061.10	1117.00	- 4.80	..
Nth American	254.50	267.90	+ 4.50	..
Property	443.50	466.90	+ 0.40	..
Pensions				
Cash	503.50	530.10	+ 0.60	...
Equity	2847.30	2997.20	-37.90	...
European	368.10	387.50	+ 0.20	.
Far East	107.40	113.10	+ 2.40	.
Fixed Interest	777.00	817.90	- 3.20	.
Index Linked	393.20	413.90	- 0.40	
International	1151.90	1212.60	+11.80	...
Managed	1625.60	1711.20	- 7.60	
Nth American	362.90	382.10	+ 7.40	.
Property	682.90	718.90	+ 1.70	..
Stock Exchange	363.30	382.50	- 1.20	..
SUN ALLIANCE St Mark's Court, Horsham, Sussex 01403 232323				
Managed Fund	1101.50	1159.50	- 6.90	..
Equity Fund	1582.90	1006.20	-29.50	..
Fixed Interest Fd	542.70	571.30	- 2.10	..
Index-Linked Fd	416.10	438.00	- 0.70	...
Property Fund	597.30	628.70	+ 0.70	...
International Fd	1027.00	1081.10	+12.80	...
N American Fd	537.30	565.60	+13.40	...
Far East Fund	201.50	212.10	- 0.40	...
Deposit Fund	347.60	365.90	+ 0.20	...
Intnl Bd I	£140.70	...	+080.00	...
Worldwide Bond	171.10	180.10	+ 2.00	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European	340.90	358.80	+ 2.90	..
Phoenix Assurance				
Wealth Assured	1118.00	1176.90	- 6.80	...
Ebor Phoenix Eq	685.00	732.60	...	...
Property Growth				
Property Fund I	703.60	..	+ 0.80	..
-do- Acc I	648.30	...	+ 0.70	...
Agricultural Fd I	958.40	...	+ 1.00	...
-do- Acc I	910.30	...	+ 0.80	..
Abbey Nat Fd I	517.20	..	+ 0.70	.
Abbey Nat Acc I	540.30	..	+ 0.70	.
Investment Fd I	593.90	..	- 3.50	...
Investment (A) I	567.10	...	- 3.40	...
Equity I	2341.70	..	-41.10	...
Equity Acc I	2224.10	...	-39.20	...
Money Fund I	563.20	...	+ 0.40	...
-do- Acc I	534.20	.	+ 0.40	..
Actuarial Fd I	980.50		- 4.80	...
Gilt-Edged Fd I	511.90		- 1.80	...
-do- Acc I	511.90	..	- 1.80	...
Retire Annuity I	1519.90	..	+ 2.00	...
Immed Annuity I	301.00	...	...	...
Bldg Soc Life I	262.50	..	+ 0.30	...
SUN LIFE OF CANADA Basingview, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2DZ Dealing: 01256 841414				
Growth Acc I	2543.60	...	...	...
Managed Acc I	1315.70	...	- 5.20	...
Equity Account I	2147.90	...	-10.10	...
Mngd Fund Acc	594.80	626.20	- 2.50	...
Equity Fund Acc	921.20	969.70	- 4.70	...
Prop Fund Acc	334.00	351.60	+ 0.40	...
Fixed Int Fd Acc	426.10	448.50	+ 0.30	...
Money Fund Acc	253.50	266.90	+ 0.30	...
Indx-Lnk Secs Ac	258.70	272.30	- 0.10	...
Pers Pens Acct I	3066.60	...	-31.50	...
Pens Mngd Acct	1424.90	1499.90	-15.40	...
Pens Guarantee	332.00	349.50	+ 0.60	...
Pens Equity	614.50	646.80	-11.10	..
Pens Property	386.70	407.10	+ 0.30	...
Pens Fixed Int	428.00	450.60	- 0.30	...
Pens Intl	343.90	362.10	- 0.10	.
Pens Money	283.80	298.80	+ 0.40	.
Pens Indx-Lnkd	260.10	273.90	- 0.20	..
SUN LIFE UNIT St James Barton, Bristol BS99 7SL 0117 9426911				
Managed Acc	1314.80	1384.10	- 6.60	...
Property Acc	491.30	517.20	+ 1.00	.
Equity Acc	2455.80	2585.10	-32.00	...
Fixed Int Acc	541.00	569.50	- 1.40	...
Cash Acc	358.80	377.70	+ 0.30	...
Amer Equity Acc	695.10	731.70	+12.60	..
Japan Acc	193.30	203.50	+10.50	...
Pacific Acc	280.30	295.00	+ 0.10	...
Far Eastern Acc	617.70	650.30	+13.50	...
International Acc	746.70	786.10	+ 4.70	...
Distribution Fund	370.80	390.40	- 4.70	4.88
European	330.60	348.10	- 1.30	...
Delfrd Dist	252.70	266.10	- 2.10	...
TSB LIFE LTD Charlton Place, Andover, Hants. SP10 1RE 01264 345678				
Managed Fund	420.90	443.10	- 2.60	..
Property Fund	256.80	270.50	- 1.70	.
Fixed Interest Fd	288.40	303.70	- 0.90	.
Money Fund	231.50	243.80	+ 0.30	..
Equity Fund	577.90	608.40	- 2.60	.
WINDSOR LIFE Windsor House, Telford, Shropshire 01952 292929				
Managed Bond	1055.50	1111.00	- 3.70	...
Money Fund	366.30	385.50	+ 0.40	.
Equity Fund	1040.10	1094.80	- 7.90	...
Fixed Interest	367.60	386.90	- 0.70	..
Property Fund	465.00	489.40	- 0.60	...
Gresham Framlington				
American & Gnrl	893.60	940.60	+21.40	...
Income	1201.00	1264.20	- 9.20	..
International Gth	858.50	903.60	+ 7.00	..
Capital Fund	902.70	950.20	- 6.90	...
Recovery Fund	625.20	658.10	+ 7.00	...
Japan & General	182.10	191.60	+ 7.00	
Formerly AEtna				
Life Funds				
Squirrel	20.86	21.95	+ 0.02	.
Bear	29.80	31.36	- 0.35	...
Owl	33.49	35.25	- 0.27	...
Bull	26.96	28.37	- 0.10	..
Stag	26.29	27.67	+ 0.29	...
Gilt Edged	24.23	25.50	- 0.05	...
Deposit	17.95	18.89	+ 0.01	...
Pensions				
Squirrel	29.65	31.21	+ 0.04	..
Bear	45.08	47.45	- 0.64	...
Owl	50.03	52.66	- 0.52	...
Bull	37.89	39.88	- 0.22	...
Stag	36.83	38.76	+ 0.47	..
Gilt Edged	32.93	34.66	- 0.08	..
Deposit	24.29	25.56	+ 0.04	...
Pre 1982 Series				
3-Way Fund I		895.46	- 2.95	...
1982 Series				
UK Equity	577.55	607.94	- 4.42	...
N Amer Equity	477.42	502.54	+11.41	...
Far East Equity	301.71	317.58	+ 3.97	...
Fixed	388.27	408.70	- 0.78	...
Cash Deposit	236.45	248.89	+ 0.26	...
Property	198.12	208.54	+ 0.24	...
Special Opp	510.50	537.36	+ 5.68	...
Managed	469.56	494.27	- 1.66	...
Index-Linked Fd	235.95	248.36	+ 0.02	..
Formerly Crown				
Life Mangd Acc	876.80	922.90	- 3.20	...
Life Fxd Int Acc	485.60	511.10	- 1.00	...
Life Equity Acc	1372.40	1444.60	-10.50	...
Life Money Acc	344.20	362.30	+ 0.40	..
Life Inv Tst Acc	1153.80	1214.50	- 4.10	..
Life Intl Acc	606.80	638.70	+ 5.10	...
Life High Inc Acc	1346.70	1417.50	-28.00	.
Life Property Acc	311.50	327.80	+ 0.30	...



هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الاصل

Clare Stewart reports on rumblings behind the green baize doors

Chips are down for casino operators


GILL ALLEN

The rise in gaming duty is seen as an arbitrary attack on casinos, who may decide to take their business abroad

Fund managers have been up in arms as one of the Budget's surprising measures hits home. This week Dawn Primarolo, a Treasury Minister, agreed to look into their complaints which arise from the sharp rise in gaming duty levied on casino operators. The Chancellor raised the top level of duty to 40 per cent, hitting shares in the two largest casino operators in London, London Clubs International and Capital Corporation, two groups in which a number of fund managers have significant holdings.

Mercury Asset Management, for example, has nearly 20 per cent of London Clubs and a further 12.8 per cent of Capital Corporation. Others with stakes in either of the two groups include Scottish Widows, Jupiter Asset Management, Schroders and PDFM. Shares in both casino operators have taken a battering since the Budget, reducing the value of stakes held by fund managers, while future profit expectations for the casino groups have been marked sharply down.

A number of fund managers together with the casino groups have written to the Treasury to protest at what they see as an arbitrary attack on the casinos that will have a severe effect on profits and perhaps force operators to take their business abroad. London casinos are an important attraction for high-spending overseas visitors to the capital.

"The measure will raise a modest amount for the Treasury so what is the rationale?" asks Stan Pearson, investment director of UK equities for Scottish Widows Investment Management. If, he adds, the move is an attack on gambling, then the Government should come out and say so.

The protests of the casino groups and fund managers have not fallen entirely on deaf ears. This week as the Finance Bill went through its second reading in the House of Commons, Ms Primarolo, who is Financial Secretary to the Treasury promised to look at complaints about the 40 per cent levy on casino group profits.

The protests to the Treasury also highlight to investors the diversity of companies in which the large fund management groups invest.

Four of the largest shareholders in Capital Corporation, which has three London casinos, are fund managers, for example, and the large investment houses are also likely to have investments in conglomerates where activities might include other investor-sensitive areas such as tobacco retailing or defence manufacturing. Private investors who have money in a unit or investment trust run by a large group will be provided with quarterly or half-yearly reports, detailing where a particular fund has money invested.

If, however, the investment is made on your behalf through an independent financial adviser, you will need to ask the IFA for such investment details.

Private investors may also be alarmed that the sharp fall in value of investments held by the fund managers, such as those in casino groups, will have a knock-on effect on their own money and hit returns from investment or unit trusts.

"The individual fund exposure is likely to be small. When you look at the change and weigh it up against all the funds, the impact on one fund is nothing," says one investment trust analyst.

Not all funds run by a single manager will in any case be invested in the same areas, most notably specialist funds focusing on emerging markets or privatisation issues.

It is also worth putting the investments in perspective. Mercury Asset Management may have a stake in two casino companies, but they are a tiny fraction of its funds under management, which total £104 billion.

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Incompetence at the Revenue

From Mr Adrian W. West

Sir, You recently published a letter describing the incompetence of the Inland Revenue in sending out this year's tax coding notices with last year's rates and allowances. The writer pointed out that by waiting a few days for the new rates to be announced, a great deal of taxpayers' money would be saved because corrected notices would not have to be sent to every taxpayer.

He greatly underestimated the incompetence of the Inland Revenue. One month after the announcement of this year's rates, I received the second version of my coding notice featuring once again last year's rates and allowances. The coding as usual contained other mistakes. While querying these I mentioned that the coding contained last year's rates. I was told a month was too short notice to enter new rates and allowances.

I am sure a lot of taxpayers' money would be saved by removing the incompetent managers who instruct staff to send out incorrect codes and who fail to train staff to enter eight revised figures into a computer in less than a month. The Government could spend a little here and save a lot.

A most irritated taxpayer.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN WEST,
4 Woodbank Close,
Crewe, CW2 6SD.

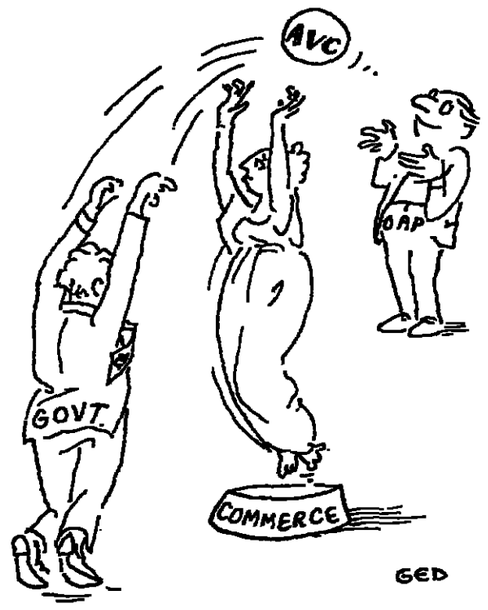
Nothing new in compulsory purchase

From Mr Patrick Millard

Sir, Mr Maurice Jay (Weekend Money Letters, April 18) is not entirely correct in suggesting that government compulsion to purchase something from a commercial company whether they like it or not is a novel idea. Every motorist in this country is forced to buy car insurance commercially whether they like it or not.

Given a good range of competition, however, premiums can be kept down by shopping around. And is there no reason why, in the field of compulsory pension provision, the Government could not offer its own form of AVC, perhaps some sort of National Savings Certificates (with tax benefits) maturing at pensionable age?

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK MILLARD,
"Albecq",
5 Levers Water,
Stukeley Meadows,
Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire, PE18 6JH.



State must provide for dignified retirement

From Mr Clifford Fuller

Sir, Forecasts that the cost of mis-selling personal pensions, involving more than two million people could now be over £11 billion should sound a warning to the Government and more particularly to every voter in this country.

Part of the cost, perhaps a considerable part, is likely to be borne by policyholders, resulting in lower than expected pension payouts and ultimately it is we, the general public, who will pay.

This adds weight to the campaign by the pensioner movement that, to be assured of a dignified retirement free from the vagaries of the marketplace, and to share in the prosperity of the country, the British electorate must demand a reasonable, publicly funded, non-means-tested, state pension with increases linked to the greater of earnings or prices.

Second pensions by all means, if they can be afforded, but the flexible employment advocated is not always conducive to company or private schemes. An adequate state pension is the most fair, safe and in the long run most economical answer to a modest but dignified retirement for all.

Yours faithfully,
CLIFFORD FULLER,
4 Farrant Avenue,
Churchdown,
Gloucester,
GL3 2BP.

Schwab trading goes virtual

Cyber investors will soon have access to a virtual trading floor after the announcement this week of a new Internet trading system by Charles Schwab, of Birmingham, the country's biggest execution-only broker.

The new system is the first Web dealing service in the United Kingdom to allow private investors to place their orders directly on to a broker's trading screen and to gain access to market information on a single site.

Existing online trading, which is available via many of the leading financial sites, amounts to little more than sending an encripted e-mail to a broker, leaving investors to update their own portfolio manually.

With this new system, the broker is accessed directly, all the information is available on one screen and portfolios will be updated automatically.

The development follows the lead of the United States, where the system has been in place since March 1996. More than 50 per cent of the trades processed by Charles Schwab's retail brokerage in the United States are now placed electronically by customers.

The company has 600,000 customers in the United Kingdom and expects a similar proportion of trades to be conducted electronically in this country.

The online system will start trading in United Kingdom-listed shares this month and investors will be able to deal on the main United States stock markets later this year. Registration is free but each trade that the customer makes will cost between £15 and £75 depending on the size.

In addition to real time share prices and trading, users will have access to Reuters news, indices, foreign exchange and company historical data.

For further information visit www.schwab-worldwide.com or ring 0870 606 6655.

SUSAN EMMETT

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£25,000 - £49,999	7.10%	6.88%	7.10%
£10,000 - £24,999	7.00%	6.78%	7.00%

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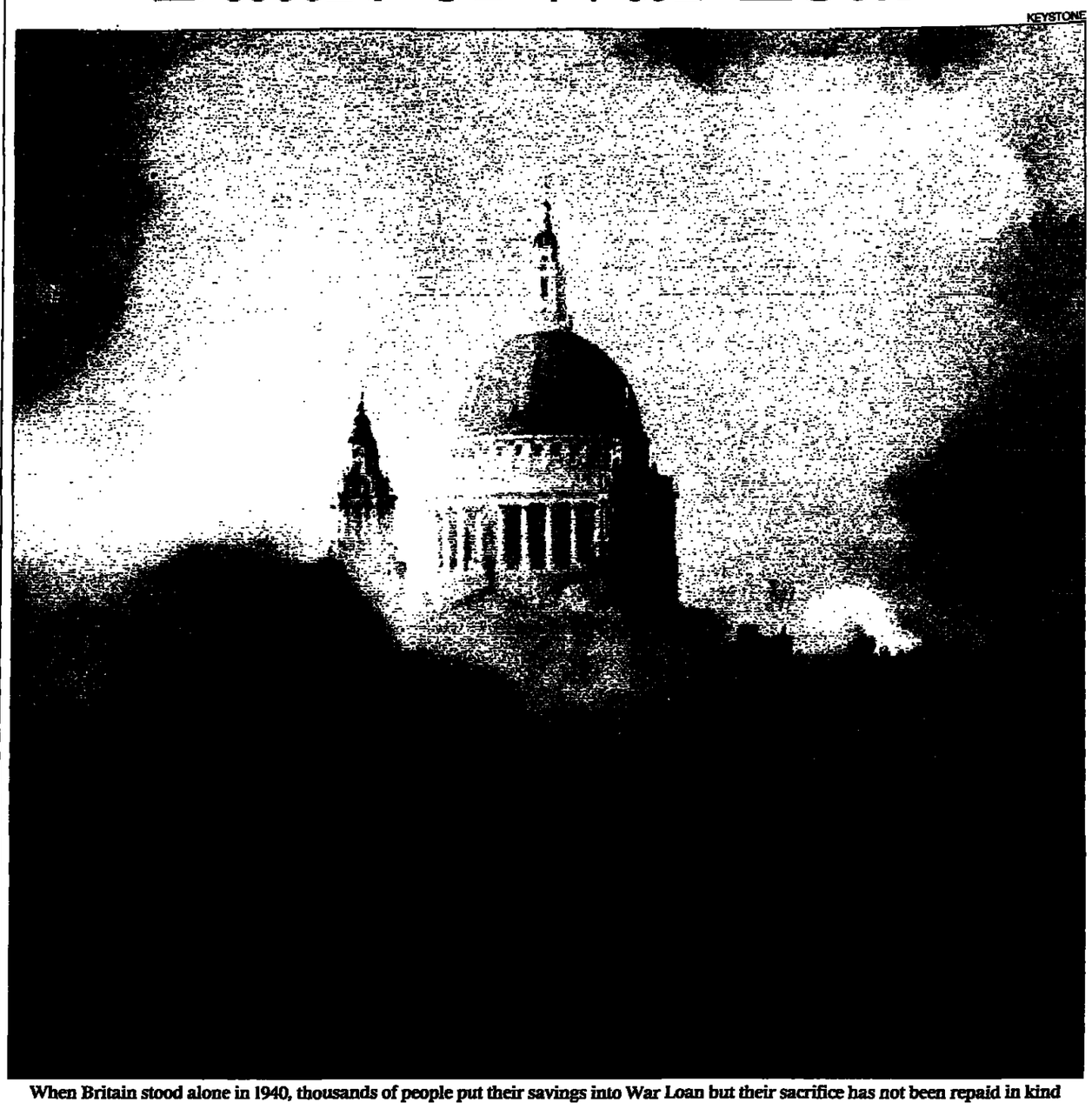
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Clare Stewart on a patriotic gesture of which governments have taken advantage

Battle of War Loan



KEYSTONE

When Britain stood alone in 1940, thousands of people put their savings into War Loan but their sacrifice has not been repaid in kind

In the 1940s when the Second World War was gathering momentum and the outlook for Britain was particularly grim, patriotic investors who were unable to fight were able to do their bit for the war effort by lending the Government some money.

Charles Johnson of Enfield, North London, did just that. In 1940 he was too old to serve in the Forces but invested £5,000 in War Loan — a government-issued security paying annual interest of 3.5 per cent. Today that £5,000 of War Loan is still held by his family, equally divided between Mr Johnson's four grandchildren.

The War Loan continues to pay annual interest of 3.5 per cent, but at current prices the investment in capital terms is worth much less than was originally paid. Further, unlike most other government securities, also called gilts, there is no date by which the loan must be repaid.

Colin Johnson feels that his grandfather's patriotic gesture deserves a better return. "There is no incentive for the Government to redeem these loans. Here was someone who put in their life savings to do his patriotic duty, and this is how it is repaid."

In theory, the Government can redeem the loans at any time, though there are few expectations that this is likely to happen. While the concept of war loans might today seem unnecessary, more than £1.9 billion of 3.5 per cent War Loan stock is still held by investors.

The 3.5 per cent gilt was originally issued in 1932, succeeding previous War Loan issues at a time when the Government was seeking to provide a much-needed boost to the economy and deal with high unemployment.

The 3.5 per cent War Loans were issued with 1952 given as the earliest possible redemption date, but with no fixed payment date given. The current yield on War Loan gilts is 5.86 per cent, around half of its yield ten years ago, but currently comparable with yields on many of the longer-dated gilts, that is to say those with around ten years to run. Holders of War Loan since the 1930s and 1940s have undoubtedly had a poor return from their investment, and with the benefit of hindsight, money invested in the stock market would have provided a bigger pot of money.

In simplest terms it is the rise and fall of interest rates that influences gilt yields, together with inflation levels. The length of time a gilt has to run before redemption is also crucial, and prices are more volatile on long-dated gilts.

Gilt yields move in the opposite way to prices. So if prices fall, yields rise, meaning investors are getting the same income, which is fixed throughout, but are paying less for it.

The attraction of gilts to investors is that they combine low risk with a guaranteed level of income. Tax is paid on the income, but there is no capital gains tax liability. Gilts may, for example, be attractive for non-taxpayers, looking for a high income and prepared to take a capital loss.

"The gilts market has done well over the last few years but buying now is very difficult because yields are so low," said Mark Bolland, at Chamberlain de Broe, the financial advisers. Investors holding War Loan and looking for income or capital growth would probably be best advised to sell, he added.

Gilts can be bought and sold through a broker or through National Savings. While government securities are often recommended as low-risk options within an investment portfolio, there is some doubt as to whether gilts can be put directly into the new individual savings account (Isa) that comes into being next year.

To date, the tax-free shelter of the Isa has been extended to cash, shares and life insurance, up to an annual limit of £5,000. The draft regulations will be published shortly.

Northern Rocks its customers' accounts yet again

Northern Rock, the Newcastle-based bank that is never far from controversy, angered savers again this week by restructuring its postal accounts and reducing the number of accounts from 11 to three.

The main changes include a consolidation of several accounts into the postal Select Instant. The Select 90 account has been replaced by the Select 60 which in turn becomes a 30-day notice account. And the restriction to three withdrawals a year on the select postal range has been removed.

Although the move means that investors have easier access to their money, many are angry because the changes mean they will be receiving lower rates.

Before the restructure, those saving over £50,000 with the Select 90 were earning 8 per cent. Now their money has been transferred into the Select 60 account, the rate has been cut to 7.35 per cent. Those with the same amount of money in the former 60-day notice account that paid 7.2 per cent are now earning only 5.35 per cent.

Bernard Wallbutton, one long-term saver, was so enraged by this "mean and nasty" behaviour he threatened to withdraw his substantial savings.

The restructuring meant Mr Wallbutton, who is retired, would be earning 0.65 per cent a year less on his savings. As Mr Wallbutton would have had to give 60 days' notice to move his savings, he would have made a loss of £55 in that period.

However, after contacting *The Times* and complaining to the bank, Mr Wallbutton has been allowed to transfer his money without notice to the recently launched Save Direct Instant Account, which pays 8.1 per cent for sums over £50,000.

This is not the first time Northern Rock has angered its customers by changing its accounts. Last month the introduction of the Save Direct Instant Account upset existing savers who felt their savings had been left to languish in uncompetitive accounts without being informed of better deals. Many were also concerned that although the new account offered a high rate, it included a 0.25 bonus that could be removed in July. However, after a report in *The Times*, Northern Rock has promised to notify customers when rates or accounts are changed.

The latest changes come after Northern Rock's announcement of a reduction in its mortgage rates and a need to redress the balance.

Tony Armstrong, director of corporate relations at Northern Rock, said it would be happy to look into individual circumstances. The helpline number is: 0191-522 3803.

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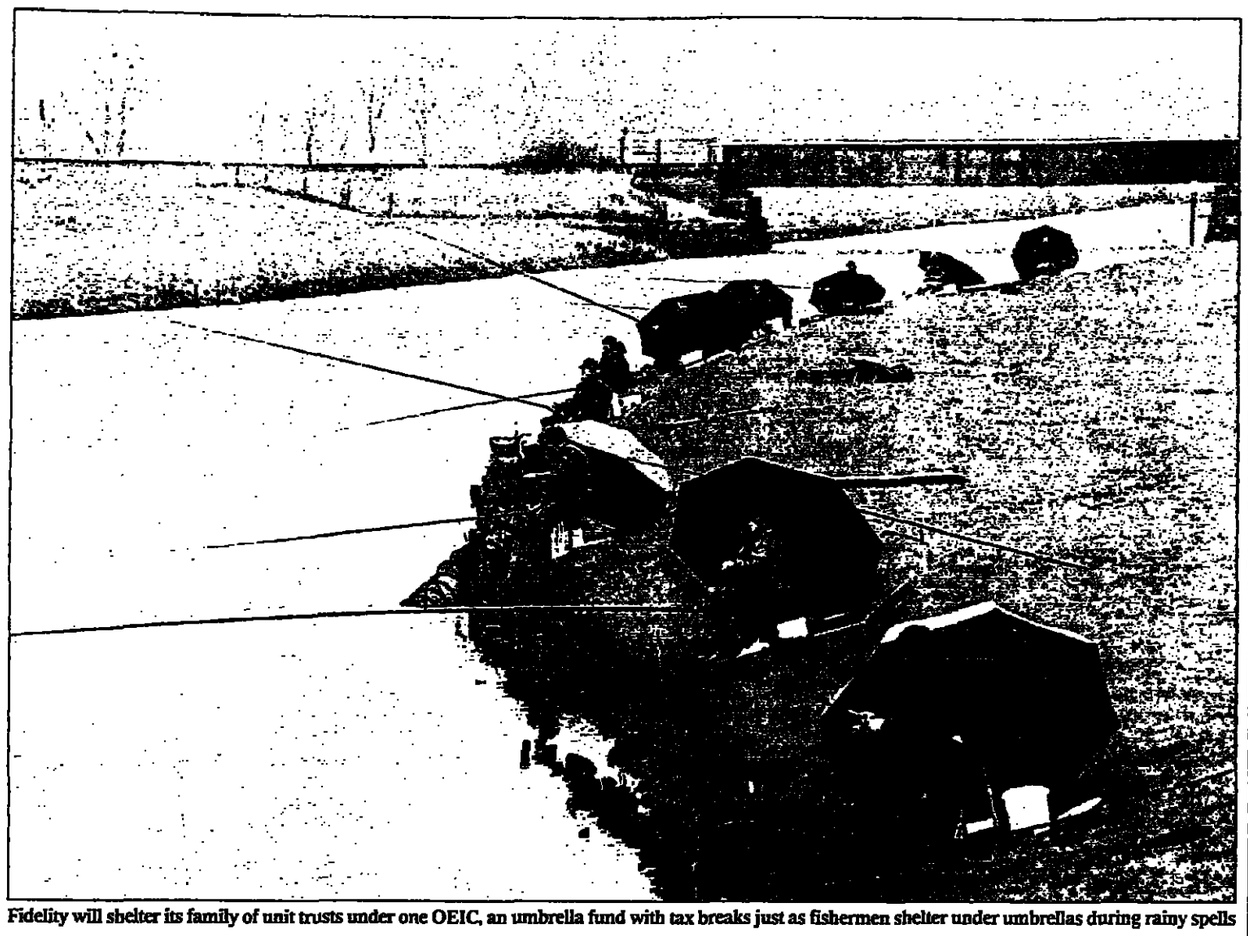
Robert Cole answers investors' questions on open-ended investment companies

A fishy business or better shelter?

News that Fidelity, the investment manager, plans to turn its £5.6 billion family of unit trusts into an open-ended investment company (OEIC) is a significant milepost for this new-fangled variety of collective investment vehicle.

Unseen gnomes in the Treasury have been beavering away for years on the development of OEICs. The basic law and regulatory structure for OEICS to exist has also been in place for many months. But it was starting to look as if the effort would be wasted. With one or two notable exceptions it seemed as if the OEIC was going to be ignored. Fidelity, however, with 300,000 investors, has breathed new life into the theory that OEICs will herald a fundamental restructuring of the £235 billion investment fund industry.

Philip Warland, the director-general of the lobby group the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds, estimates that within two years half the money now in unit trusts, about £85 billion, will be in OEICs.



Fidelity will shelter its family of unit trusts under one OEIC, an umbrella fund with tax breaks just as fishermen shelter under umbrellas during rainy spells

Q So what is an open-ended investment company.

A An OEIC — it is pronounced "oik" actually, which is about as near as the promoters of these things get to telling a joke.

Q Yes, yes, very droll I'm sure, but what are they really?

A An OEIC is an investment fund used by private and institutional investors. They are a variation on the theme of investment trusts and unit trusts. Investors who have either insufficient wealth or little expert investment knowledge use funds such as these to get into the stock market. The money gathered from investors is used to build a broadly spread portfolio.

Q And what changes will conversion bring?

A In big reorganisations like Fidelity's family of unit trust — loosely connected via the fund management house — will be drawn together under one umbrella. Sub funds of one single-parent OEIC are then set up to replace the previously separate unit trusts.

Q I never really understood the difference between an investment trust and a unit trust so why am I being further discombobulated with this new — what did you call it? This 'oik'?

A Why? Because the people that run investment funds, particularly managers of unit trusts, stand to benefit. Of course. You did not think the collective investment fund industry is there for your benefit, did you? Managers will gain in three ways. An OEIC is easier to sell to overseas investors than a unit trust. its structure gives fund managers more flexibility and it might be cheaper to operate.

Q Is there no way OEICs will help the ordinary investor?

A There is single pricing. You will be able to buy and sell OEICs at the same price. Currently the buying price and selling price of a unit trust or investment trust is different. Tricky concept, this bid-offer spread, but OEICs will do away with it. The single price will be equivalent to net asset value. Charges, which used to be wound into the bid-offer spread, will be separated.

Q If OEICs are more flexible and cheaper to run surely investors should benefit too?

A Yes they should, but don't count on it. Remember that when decimalisation was introduced shopkeepers used the confusion as an opportunity to sting customers.

Q Well, will there be no net effect this time?

A Not necessarily, but beware. As well as the threat that fund managers will use the opportunity to squeeze more fees out of us, there is also the danger that the anatomy of the investment will change.

Q How do you mean its anatomy will change?

A The investment remit might be altered. Say you bought a unit trust investing in companies based in the Far East, and that the fund is quite small and that the same fund manager has another small unit trust investing in Latin America and another in East Europe. He could use the opportunity provided by the OEIC to amalgamate the three into, say, an emerging markets fund.

Q What is wrong with amalgamating into another fund?

A Nothing, necessarily. But the underlying nature changes.

Q It is my money and, partly, my fund. Can I not stop conversion if I want to?

A There will be a vote but you could be outvoted. Especially if the fund manager orchestrating change uses his clout to bamboozle — sorry I mean persuade — investors.

Q Will OEICs get the same Pep/Isa tax breaks as unit trusts and investment trusts?

A Yes, they will get the same tax breaks

Q Will unit trusts and investment trusts both become OEICs?

A Yes, but the majority of convertees will be unit trusts.

Q Why will they want to become unit trusts?

A Because unit trusts and OEICs both have an open-ended structure. An investment trust is closed-ended. If a fund is open-ended, new investors' money is used directly to buy more of the same kind of shares or bonds specified in the investment remit.

Q I am not sure I want to ask, but what is a closed-ended fund?

A The manager of a closed-ended fund — such as an investment trust company — raises a certain amount of money at one stage. He or she then uses that cash to create the portfolio. Investors own shares in the investment company and if they want to get out they sell their shares in the company to someone else. New investors have to find sellers. Think of it as two level arrangement.

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GOING SHOPPING 52

Graham Searjeant says don't write off the superstores

WEEKEND MONEY

GRADUATE LOAN 55

On the first rungs of the property ladder



Banks fear 'backdoor' ID cards

Caroline Merrell asks if there is a hidden agenda in a government plan to keep the banks open in poor areas



JOAN RUSSELL/GUZELIAN

Leeds & Holbeck Building Society is bucking the trend by keeping branches open in inner city areas where other banks and societies have left

Banks fear a government initiative to stop branch closures in poor and remote areas is not, as is claimed, to maintain access for those on low incomes, but it is part of a bid to introduce a national identity scheme. Bank-card technology is just one step away from being advanced enough to carry unique personal information, such as fingerprint images and other biometric data. For example, this week Nationwide Building Society launched the first eye-print recognition system based on iris identification.

In a trial launched at Nationwide's Swindon branch, a camera mounted in the cash machine photographs the iris of the customer's eye. If the iris matches the databank records, the customer can make a withdrawal. He no longer needs his personal identification number (PIN).

If the Government can encourage the 5 per cent of adults who do not have a bank account to open one, then bank cards would be the ideal vehicle for a national identity program. Cards where information is carried on a computer chip, rather than a magnetic strip are already being piloted.

If a national ID scheme is coupled with greater involvement by the banks in administering social security benefits, then the Government has an ideal tool for cracking down on benefit fraud. Frank Field, the Social Services Minister, is putting pressure on banks to keep branches open in remote and poor areas, to maintain access to the 25 million people that claim any sort of social security.

Administering benefits through banks and building societies rather than through the post office or through the postal system would save the Government millions of pounds a year. More sinisterly, it would also allow it to keep track of the millions of people who claim benefit, but have no link with a financial organisation. As well as being helpful in fighting benefit fraud, an ID program could be a tool in plans for "stakeholder" pensions — the government scheme for expanding pensions to the masses.

About 2.4 million people earn less than £62 per week, this means they do not have to pay national insurance or income tax on their earnings. If they do not have a bank account, to all intents and purposes, they are invisible.

Banks are not particularly interested in courting those on low incomes — they will not get a high score on banks' credit rating systems. A low score will prevent people from getting an overdraft, credit card or a bank loan. They may also be prevented from getting a bank account altogether.

High earners who routinely go overdrawn and borrow money are the type of customer most valued by the banks. It is from these customers that they reap the most profits. According to Unity Bank, the bank owned by the unions and Co-op, more than half of all union members are turned down for credit, be it a credit card or personal loan, by their high street bank.

Moves to keep branches open is in direct opposition to the current trend of branch closures, which has helped produce the record profits recently experienced by the banks. According to figures from the British Bankers Association, the number of branches of the top nine banks have dropped from 14,000, in 1986 to 10,000 this year.

A study by the management consultant Booz Allen & Hamilton, found the costs to the bank of carrying out a transaction through a branch is twice those of a transaction via the telephone, which is why now all the high street banks offer a telephone banking option. Barclays has cut its branch network from 2,800 to 2,000 over the past 10 years, while the NatWest branches have been slashed from just over 3,000 to 1,700 over the same time. The banks say keeping branches open in deprived areas carries a certain amount of risk. Barclays Bank said that it had been forced to close branches for safety reasons. Nick Cobban, of Barclays, said: "We are reviewing our branches. This may mean that new branches open."

He added: "We have been forced to close branches in the North East, Liverpool and North London because of raids." He added: "We will not keep branches open in areas where we cannot guarantee the safety of staff." Other institutions believe that they have a commitment to poorer communities.

The Leeds & Holbeck Building Society sees Leeds as its heartland and has not, unlike Barclays and Halifax, withdrawn from the Harehill Road district on the city's outskirts. The society said it has seen some benefit from remaining in this area of high unemployment as it has attracted customers from rivals who have closed their doors.

According to the BBA, about 5 per cent of households do not have use of a bank account. The association claims that many of these people are those in the younger age group, from the age of 16 to 24, while many are people who do not opt to have a bank account.

Roger Miles, BBA, pointed out that in France everyone had a constitutional right to a bank account, this, however, did not mean that everyone was willing to take out a bank account. "There are still those that do not have an account," he said.

The BBA said, in part, branch closures are the result of changes in customers' patterns of using banks. "More and more customers are opting for new ways to access their money, such as automated teller machines, plastic cards and telephone banking, as an alternative to visiting a branch."

INSIDE



51 Anne Ashworth on changing accounts at Northern Rock

50 Paper profits. Fortunes from old bank notes



PENSIONS



56 Are you saving enough for your pension?

INVESTMENT

59 The Thomson Travel offer perks



BUSINESS NEWS PAGES 27-31

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

The hidden costs of pension top-up

Caroline Merrell says it is best to put AVCs into your company's fund

The likelihood of retiring on a full pension is about as remote as winning the lottery. The chances of achieving the elusive two-thirds of final salary allowed by the Inland Revenue at retirement are smaller than ever after the removal last year of a pension schemes' ability to reclaim tax relief on UK dividends.

Many people, as they approach pensionable age, realise that they have woefully inadequate cover for their old age, and will often start making additional contributions to schemes offered by their employers, or, will seek independent plans to boost their retirement income.

A report issued this week by Bacon & Woodrow, the consulting actuary, revealed that about 25 per cent of those who started additional voluntary contribution (AVC) plans independently from their employers' schemes (free-standing AVC), ended up putting their money into the very plans offered by their employer.

However, they pay more in charges because FSAVC plans usually carry an element of commission. Calls by Bacon & Woodrow and some employers for the Personal Investment Authority (PIA) to investigate what they believe is a mis-selling scandal have been rejected by the PIA.

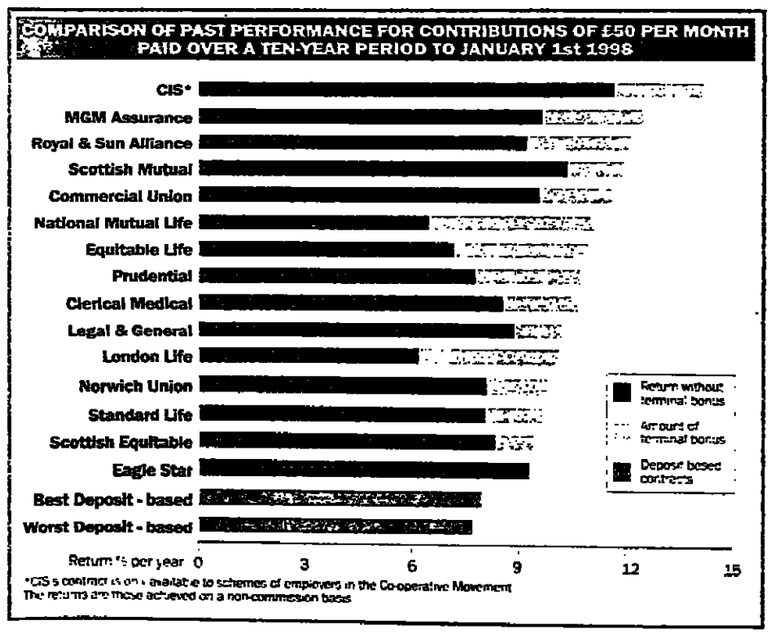
The Bacon & Woodrow report found a big difference in performance of AVC plans. A policyholder paying £50 per month into a with-profits contract over the past ten years would have achieved a fund of £12,473 with CIS, the top-performing with-profits company. The same policy with Eagle Star, the bottom performer, would have achieved a pension pot of £9,704.

On unit-linked plans, the differences were not as marked. The top performing unit-linked contract over the last ten years was offered by Mercury Asset Management, which produced a fund of £11,252. The worst return was produced by Skandia, where £50 per month invested over ten years produced only £9,951.

Bacon & Woodrow pointed out that there had been a number of demutualisations of insurance companies over the years, which has resulted in windfall bonuses and share allocations for individual investors.

However, as the actuary said: "The AVC schemes are usually set up on a group basis, and members are not treated as a group of individual investors. In the case of the building societies this has resulted in no windfall payouts, which on the face of it appears unfair."

The actuary wants the mutuals to ensure that members of AVC schemes are treated fairly in the event of a demutualisation.



Fake call breaches security at bank

First Direct, the telephone bank, is to issue a written warning to its 850,000 customers after an alleged security breach this week.

The letters will be sent out over the next month after a woman posing as a member of First Direct staff claimed to have succeeded in obtaining personal information from an account holder.

A spokesman for First Direct said security was "a serious issue" and following the incident it would be writing to customers to remind them of procedures used by staff when telephoning with account inquiries.

"First Direct has never had to pay out because of a breach of security, but in any case the customer would never be liable for any losses. The letters will be sent at the next available opportunity over the next month," the spokesman said.

First Direct acted after Dillon Watkins, 24, a public relations account manager with the London agency Firefly and a customer of First Direct, challenged a friend to test the bank's security system.

The friend persuaded his girlfriend to pose as a First Direct employee. She then telephoned Mr Watkins about his account, and after a series of simple questions succeeded in obtaining personal information.

Mr Watkins said: "I did not recognise her voice and I was horrified when my friend revealed what had happened. I decided to contact First Direct to alert them to the matter.

"Telephone banks need their security to be absolutely watertight, otherwise you might as well keep the money under the mattress."

MARIANNE CURPHEY



The planned introduction of the single currency next January is a catalyst for change across Europe. And change creates opportunities, as investors have already realised.

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MEMORIAL



Revealed: a colossal fountain for the Princess

PAGE 3

PETS



Meet the Barnum and Bailey of terrier racing

PAGE 19

FOOD & DRINK



Who will defend the veggies now Linda's gone?

PAGE 6

TRAVEL



Pier pressure: festival mania by the sea

PAGE 26

THE TIMES

WEEKEND

SATURDAY APRIL 25 1998

'You're still you, and I love you'

MARK LENNIHAN / AP



Superman and his super woman: Christopher Reeve with his wife Dana, who gave him the will to live after a riding fall broke his neck and left him paralysed from the neck down

'Why not die and save everyone a lot of trouble?', thought actor Christopher Reeve as he lay paralysed. Then his wife spoke the words he believes saved his life. Superman tells his own story

I wake up in the morning. And because I sleep with my mouth open, my throat is excruciatingly dry because of the drugs I'm on and the lack of humidity in the room. And I may have spasmed to a very uncomfortable place and my neck is often twisted into a painful position. And I'm lying in this narrow bed, alone, because it's not big enough for Dana to share, though she always sleeps in the same room with me. She has a single bed next to me, so we can be near each other and talk and wake up and know we're together.

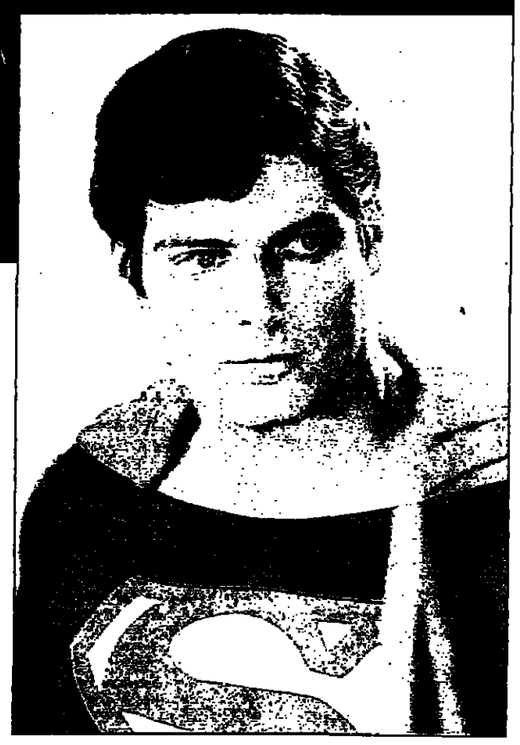
When a catastrophe happens it's easy to feel so sorry for yourself that you can't even see anybody around you. But the way out is through your relationships. That is the answer to the dilemma of being frozen — at least it's the answer I found.

It all began when I was bitten by the three-day eventing riding bug. My plan was to spend the 1995 season with my new horse, Buck, doing training level events and then to move up to preliminary in 1996. I got up early on that fateful Saturday morning. My dressage time was 9.08am. We did very nicely, though Buck was a little tense. I felt he knew that the cross-country was coming up next, and that's what he loves best. In spite of that we had a pretty good ride and, at the end of the dressage, I arrived back at the stables and ran into John Williams, an advanced level rider and trainer and a good friend. He had just come over to say hello since he lived nearby. I told him that I liked the course and was glad I'd come to Virginia, that I had a great new horse and was looking forward to a good ride. He wished me luck. From that moment until I regained consciousness several days later in the intensive care unit at the University of Virginia, I have no memory of what occurred.

Later, as I tried to reconstruct the sequence of events, I was told that I finished suiting up, put on my chest protector and helmet, got Buck out of the stall, and headed out for the warm-up area. I left the starting box at exactly 3.01pm. We made a nice strong start. Witnesses said that Buck was absolutely willing and ready. First jump, no problem. The second jump was a medium-size log pile. No problem. Then we came to the zigzag. The fence judge's report says I was going fast, not excessively fast but moving right along.

Apparently Buck started to jump the fence, but all of a sudden he just put on the brakes. No warning, no hesitation, no sense of anything wrong. The judge reported that there was nothing to suggest Buck was

Continued on page 2



SHOPPING.....4,5 | FOOD & DRINK....6,7 | PROPERTY.....13,14 | COUNTRY LIFE.....8 | GARDENING.....9,10 | HOME LIFE.....16,17 | TRAVEL.....23-31 | GAMES.....35,36

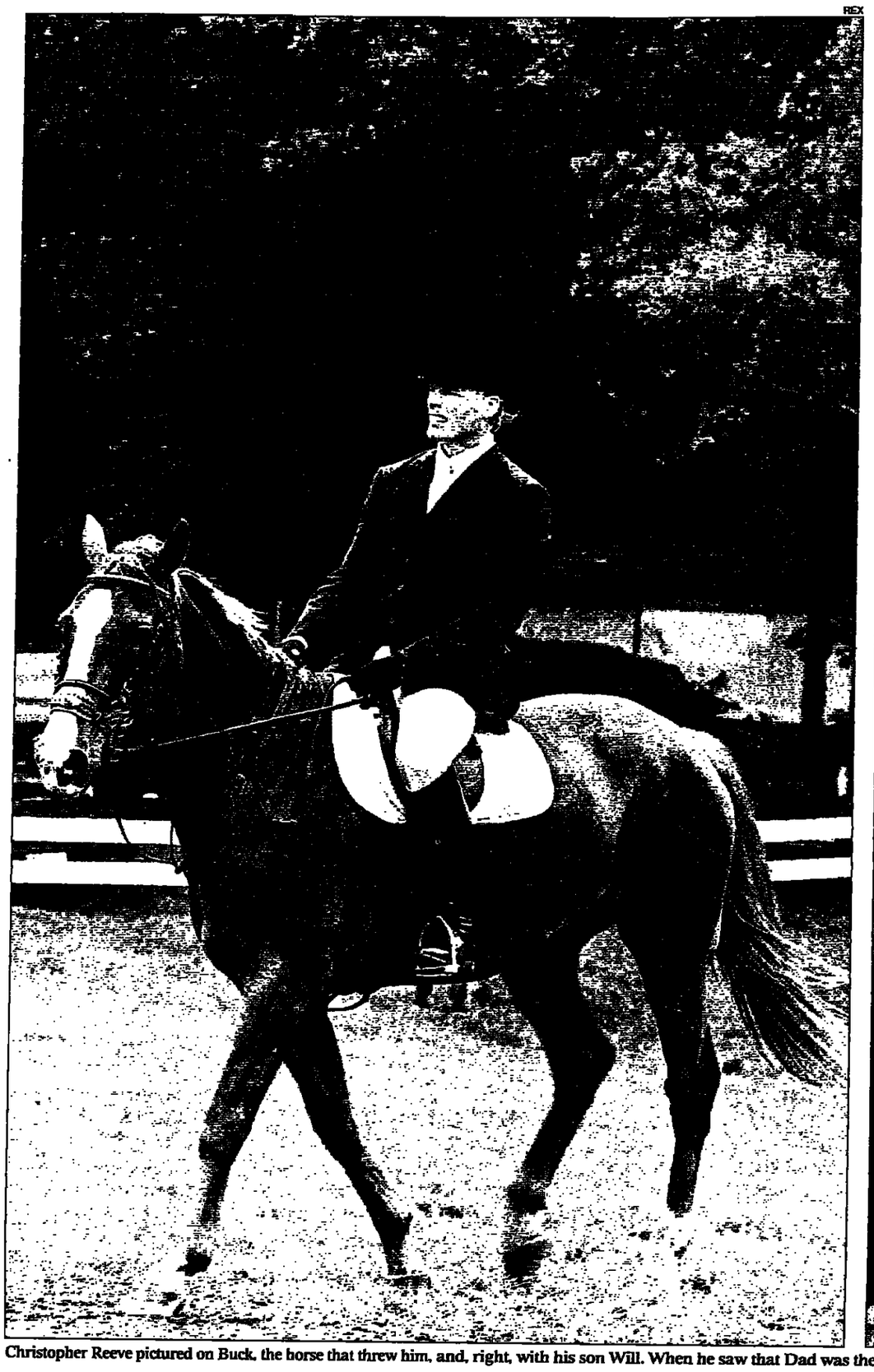
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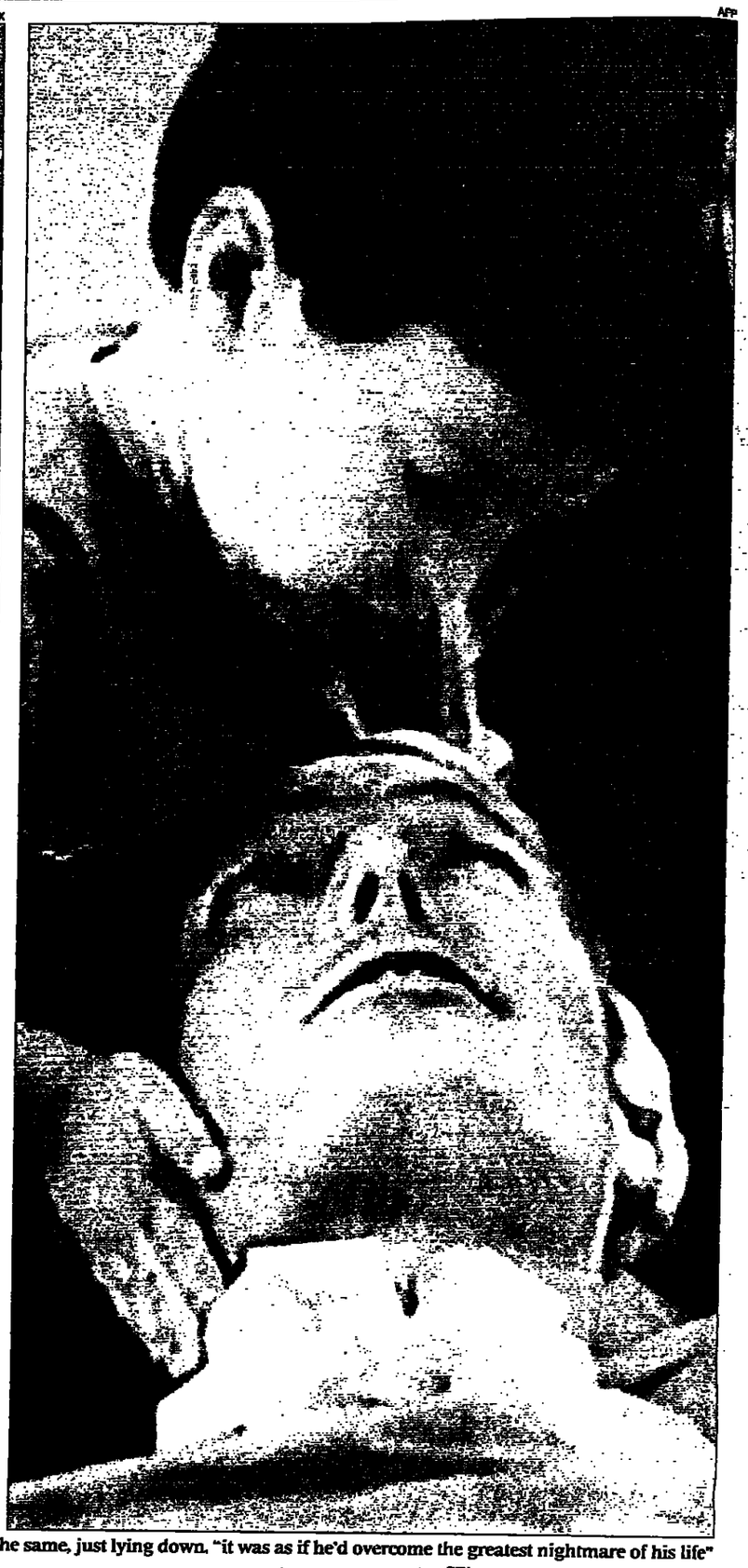
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'I have some bad news. There's a chance he may never breathe on his own.' It was like being slammed into a wall. Dana's whole body and head turned to one side, as if she had been struck


REX


AFP

Christopher Reeve pictured on Buck, the horse that threw him, and, right, with his son Will. When he saw that Dad was the same, just lying down, "it was as if he'd overcome the greatest nightmare of his life"

CHRISTOPHER REEVE

Continued from page 1

worried about the fence. He just stopped. It was what riders call a dirty stop: it occurs without warning. Someone said that a rabbit ran out and spooked Buck. Someone said it could have been shadows.

When I went over I took the bridle, the bit, the reins, everything off Buck's face. I landed right on my head because my hands were entangled in the bridle and I couldn't get an arm free to break my fall. I flipped over, landing on the other side of the fence.

My helmet prevented any brain damage, but the impact of the landing broke my first and second vertebrae. This is called a hangman's injury because it's the kind of break that happens when the trapdoor opens and the noose snaps tight. It was as if I'd been hanged, cut down, and then sent to a hospital. I was heard to say: "I can't breathe", and that was it.

By the time the paramedics arrived at the scene, I hadn't breathed for three minutes. They stabilised my head and managed to keep me alive by squeezing air into my body with an ambu bag. Apparently I was still conscious; later they described me as "combative". I'm very lucky they reached me so quickly, because after four minutes of not breathing, brain damage begins. They managed to hold my head still enough to put on a collar that immobilised my neck. After I was loaded into the ambulance, they drove off the field extremely slowly, so that the terrain wouldn't cause further damage.

Dana was usually always there when I competed, but this time she was still back at the Holiday Inn where our two-year-old son Will was having a difficult time waking up from his nap. Suddenly the telephone rang. It was Peter Lazar, one of our group, and the first thing he said was: "Now, don't panic."

Dana asked: "What happened?"

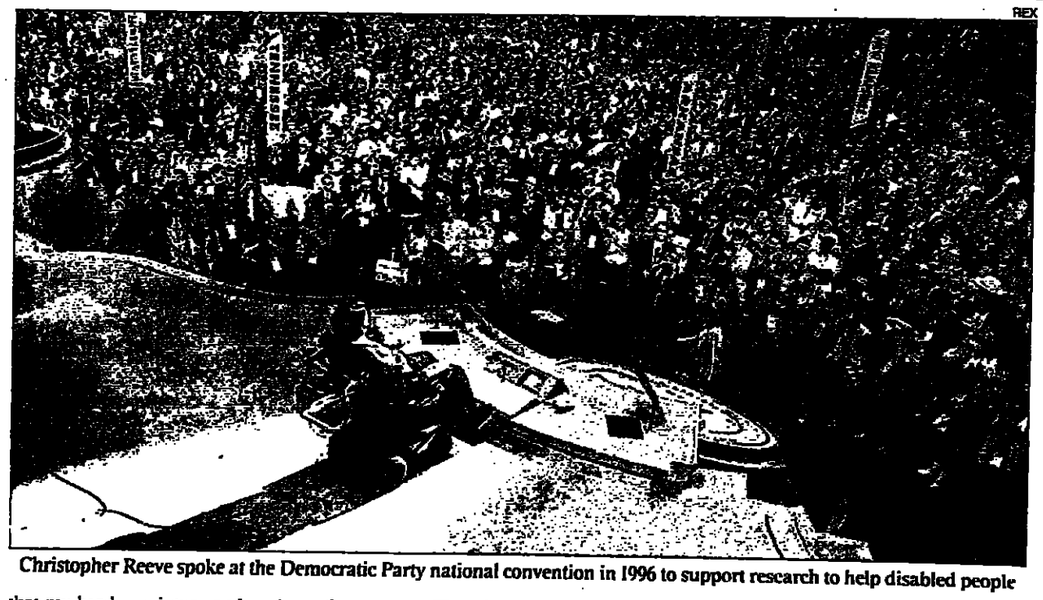
He said: "Chris had a spill. I don't know why, but they had to take him off the field on a stretcher."

Dana took Will, drove to the Culpepper hospital, and found the emergency room. A nurse came in. Dana asked: "Is my husband all right? Is he OK?" The nurse would only say: "The doctor will be out in a minute."

Dana was beginning to sense that something terrible had happened. She was still very conscious of Will, who went on talking and wanting to play. There was only one other person in the waiting room. Then she saw a helicopter landing in the courtyard, with the name Pegasus painted on the side. She thought: "That's not for a broken arm."

Dr Maloney, the admitting physician at the ER in Culpepper, came in to the office and told Dana that he was very worried about me. But he didn't tell her at first that I had broken my neck. Will was sitting in Dana's lap, and as Dr Maloney was giving her the details of my injury, she felt like she was being knocked backwards with each new thing he said: I had broken the top two cervical vertebrae (C1 and C2). I was having trouble breathing. I was on a respirator. After each new piece of information, Dana took a breath and said: "OK, OK, OK." She felt as if she were being punched repeatedly and had to prepare herself each time for the next blow.

Will was sitting there squeezing Dana's nose with his fingers so that she would say "beep". It was one of his favourite games. He did that as Dana was hearing about my injury. She listened, and she kept saying "beep" — trying to remain the parent in control while receiving the devastating news.


REX

Christopher Reeve spoke at the Democratic Party national convention in 1996 to support research to help disabled people

The people at Culpepper said that Dana should see me before the helicopter took off, because it might be for the last time. Dana had to collect Will, try not to frighten him with what was happening, and check out of the hotel. Then she drove to the University of Virginia, as I was being flown there in a helicopter named for a flying horse.

When Dana arrived at UVA, she still had no idea what to expect. Dr Nadkarni came in, sat down and said: "I have some bad news. There's a chance he may never breathe on his own." Dana said it was like being slammed into a wall. Her whole body and head involuntarily turned to one side, as if she had been struck.

Dana got Will something to eat, then went back to the emergency room. It was about 5.30pm, still light out. Will was very hungry, and Dana was trying to keep him happy while keeping herself from falling apart.

A doctor brought her in to me. I was lying on a gurney, intubated and still unconscious. She met with the chief of neurosurgery, Dr John Jane, and Dr Scott Henson, his second-in-command. They told her I was extremely lucky to have survived the accident, that my head was intact, and that my brain stem, so close to the site of the injury, appeared unharmed. If there is damage to the brain stem, your face doesn't work: you can't move your mouth, can't move any of your facial muscles.

I was on morphine and completely snowed. And whenever I did become conscious for brief moments, all they could do was wash my mouth out with flavoured swabs — little pieces of foam on a stick that come in cherry, raspberry, and orange. I had no idea of my situation. Even in the brief moments when I was awake, I was unaware.

As soon as I arrived at UVA, Dr Jane had me stabilised to prevent any more compression in the spine. Compression causes electrical impulses attempting to travel through the injured area to go haywire, which leads to the death of even more nerve cells.

As these cells die, another wave of destruction radiates out from the damaged site. Immune cells flood in and, in a frenzied attempt to clear away the accumulated debris, begin to chew up damaged and healthy nerves alike. So, as the victim lies immobilised and unconscious, inflammation is steadily destroying the essential functions of the body: breathing, bladder and bowel control, sexual response, and any motion below the neck. Only the heart and the brain continue to function normally.

Dr Jane had me placed on a bed and implanted a metal structure into my head just above the temples. Then he attached a heavy weight behind it to keep me immobile. I was hooked up to machines that monitored my heart rate, pulse, blood pressure and oxygen saturation levels.

My lungs had begun to fill with fluid, making me highly susceptible to pneumonia. In the past at this stage a patient usually died. I had pneumonia in one lung, but they managed to clear the infection with powerful antibiotics and by repeated suctioning — an extremely unpleasant experience. They stick a tube into your lungs and suck out the liquid. The tube going down your throat can be very painful, and you're off the ventilator for at least four or five breaths, which can seem like an eternity. I dreaded suctioning.

After five days I became fully conscious and able to make sense. At first I thought this was just another temporary problem. I needed some kind of surgery, but I'd be up and around before long. It was only after the doctors left that I really began to absorb what they had told me: this was a spinal cord injury, a paralysing injury. Now I understood how serious it was: about as bad as it gets. Why not die and save everyone a lot of trouble?

Dana came into the room. She stood beside me, and we made eye contact. I mouthed my first lucid words to her: "Maybe we should let me go." Dana started crying. She said: "I am only going to say this once: I will support whatever you want to do, because this is your life, and your decision. But I want you to know that I'll be with you for the long haul, no matter what." Then she added the words that saved my life: "You're still you. And I love you."

What Dana said made living seem possible, because I felt the depth of her love and commitment. I was even able to make a little joke. I mouthed: "This is way beyond the marriage vows — in sickness and in health." And she said: "I know." I knew then and there that she was going to be with me for ever. My job would be to learn how to cope with this and not be a burden. I would have to find new ways to be productive again.

My two older children had come over from England — Matthew, aged 15, and Alexandra, 11. At first, Will was too terrified to join us in the ICU. He was even afraid of Dana visiting me. It took him several days to overcome that fear. But when he finally did come in and saw that Dad was the same, just lying down, he had a dramatic surge in bravery. It was as if he'd overcome the greatest nightmare of his life.

He'd come in and I'd be connected to all kinds of IVs, tubes, and hoses and things, with a tracheotomy tube coming out of my throat, like the one I have now. But Will could look past all that and see me.

I realised: I can't drift away from this. It wouldn't be fair to my family. I *don't* want to leave. This realisation, following what Dana had said, ended my thoughts of suicide. How Dana held everything together during those days, I don't know, but a lot of what she did was for Will's sake.

His third birthday was on June 7; my operation took place on the sixth. Somehow Dana organised a birthday party for him, with a hired clown and lots of nice people from Virginia. He had fun; he had a good day. Later, when I saw the videotape, I couldn't stop crying. It was excruciating to watch him celebrating without me.

After ten days in intensive care, I was ready for the operation. My lungs had cleared — now I would be able to lie on my stomach for seven hours without choking or suffocating. One of the greatest concerns of the surgical team was how to turn me face down without doing further damage to my spinal cord.

Eventually, Dr Henson held my head and ten people very slowly turned me over. They put me on a table with a cut-out for my face. For the next eight hours they patiently worked to put me back together again.

At the time I had no idea that the kind of surgery they would perform on me had never been done before. Dr Jane had to reattach my head to my spinal column without causing brain damage while giving me the possibility of movement. In short, he had to put my head back on my body. I'm glad I didn't know ahead of time what they were doing. Time and time again their tools came within a sixteenth of an inch of the brain stem. When I came out of the surgery, I looked like a prizefighter whose face had been badly pummelled. I was almost unrecognisable.

Few operations are as perilous as those dealing with a neck injury. Thirty-one pairs of nerves sprout from the spinal cord. Closest to the brain are the eight cervical nerves that process information to the neck, shoulders, arms, and hands.

Before the operation I could move only my head, but head-turning muscles are controlled by nerves within the brain, not the spinal cord. A year later I was able to shrug my shoulders and breathe on my own for short periods of time, meaning that nerves at the level of my first, second, and third cervical vertebrae had begun to function again. Most spinal cord patients can expect to recover function two levels below their injury.

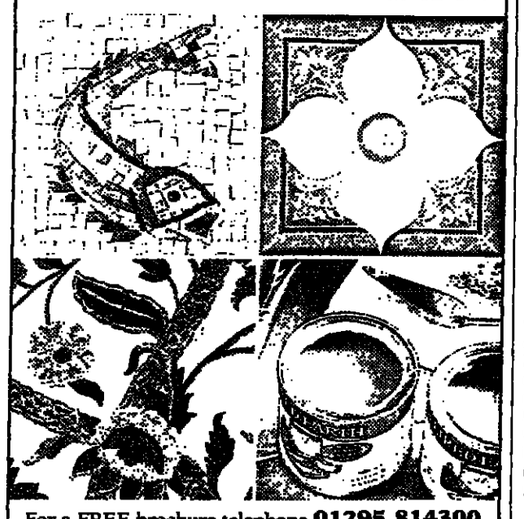
And that is about where I am now.

● *Extracted from* Still Me *by Christopher Reeve, published next week by Century at £16.99. Times readers can buy a copy for £14.99 by calling* The Times *Bookshop on 0990 134459*

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Marcus Binney assesses plans for a 300ft fountain in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales

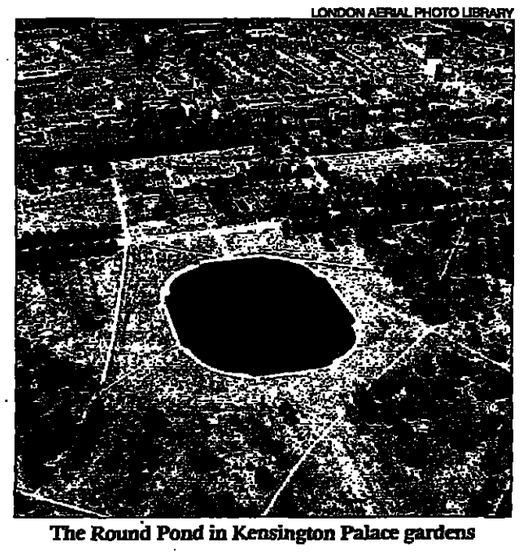
Diana's fountain – the biggest in Britain

MONTAGE BY LEE BANKS / PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD POHLE



The proposed fountain memorial to Diana, Princess of Wales, in the Round Pond would reach 300ft into the air; the spray could blow more than a mile away. The Model Yacht Sailing Club is one of several potential local objectors

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The Round Pond in Kensington Palace gardens

A soaring 300ft single jet fountain is proposed as the central feature for a new garden in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The jet, rising higher than the famous Emperor fountain at Chatsworth, would be set in the centre of the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens and would cost £50 an hour to run. It is proposed not only as an eloquent monument to the princess but as a means of moving the focus of any new garden in her memory away from Kensington Palace and Kensington Gore.

There has been intense opposition from local residents and councillors who saw Kensington High Street brought to a virtual standstill in the days after the princess's death when tens of thousands of people came to lay flowers in front of the gates on the south side of the palace.

Some estimates have suggested that up to five million visitors might come to a garden here, making it far and away the most visited garden in England — well exceeding the 1.5 million who go to the much larger gardens at Hampton Court. The new garden is conceived so that a great many visitors will arrive from underground stations along the north side of the park or via a coach park at the north end of the gardens.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, says: "We have been invited by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, to work with Historic Royal Palaces and the Royal Parks Agency and have submitted a scheme. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer's committee favour the proposal, we will set about drawing up a brief and making very wide consultations. The intention is to hold an international competition open to both landscape gardeners and architects and perhaps involving different designers for different parts of the garden."

Gordon Brown's committee has narrowed thousands of suggestions, for a Diana memorial, down to a shortlist of three. These were to have been put on display in the Orangery at Kensington Palace next week but this has been delayed so as not to interfere with council elections on May 7.

Earlier this year Chris Smith made it clear he would not consider plans to recreate the elaborate baroque garden laid out for William and Mary to the south of Kensington Palace and known from detailed engravings, sending out a clear signal he wanted a modern design. Care is likely to be taken that the entrance to a new garden will not be from Kensington Gore but off Broad Walk. The third element of the plan is to transform the existing children's garden into a more elaborate playground with exciting but as yet unspecified modern designs. Substantial planting is also proposed to create quiet areas for people to sit.

The initial idea for a fountain came from the architect Sir William Whitfield, former surveyor of St Paul's Cathedral, who has drawn up new proposals for Paternoster Square which look likely to win approval from the City Corporation early this summer. Sir William says: "I had the idea for the fountain many years ago, but the time never seemed right. The Round Pond isn't a place for sailing model boats. It's a major feature of the original early 18th-century layout. One really large Emperor fountain would command all the vistas converging on the pond. It would be visible above the trees from Hyde Park Corner."

Sir William's thoughts on the pond have not gone down well with the Model Yacht Sailing club, founded in 1876. Under the command of Commodore Robin Redhead, its 40 members continue to race yachts, many by remote control, on the Round Pond on Sunday mornings between 10.30am and 1.30pm. A member since 1938, he bristles at the idea of tampering with the pond. "It would be extraordinary to stop the model boating on it as it is part of the London scene. It has been going on for over a hundred years."

The Round Pond may have gained its name from the fact that there is no English word to translate the French term *pièce d'eau*, literally a sheet of water. Though just over eight acres in size, its geometric form makes the description "lake" inappropriate. Its shape is that of a baroque mirror with rounded corners and extruded sides. An 18th-century engraving shows people standing round the east end admiring Kensington Palace reflected in the water. It was designed by the greatest of the early landscape gardeners, Charles Bridgeman, for George I and first filled with water in 1728, the year after the king's death.

This was the age of Versailles and the grand axis and the long vista. Beyond the pond was another classic French feature, still visible today, a *patte d'oie*, or goose's foot, consisting of three grand avenues radiating from a semi-circle of grass known as the Great Bow. Each avenue or ride was planted with a double line of elms.

By the time Bridgeman created the pond, fountain jets had gone out of fashion. But Queen Caroline, George II's wife, who came to live at Kensington Palace (and is famous for her planting at Kew), had admired the 90ft-high fountain in front of the Hanoverian Palace at Herenhausen where she lived after her marriage in 1705. As the Chatsworth fountain was only installed in a baroque canal by Sir Joseph Paxton in the 19th century there is a certain symmetry in adding a jet to Bridgeman's basin at the end of the 20th.

The famous fountain jet in Lake Geneva, rising a staggering 400ft, dates not from the time of the League of Nations but from the 1890s as part of plans for an international fair. Initially it was entirely gravity-fed from the mountains.

There is no need for a huge back-up reservoir to fuel the Diana fountain, according to Tim Rock who developed the fountain proposal with Mr Whitfield. "It will be throwing six tons of water into the air, but can be replenished from the sunken river which flows under Bayswater Road into the Serpentine," he says.

Very tall fountains can turn into spray which can carry considerable distances in the wind, up to one and a quarter miles in the case of the Diana fountain, according to Mr Rock. Sudden gusts can soak spectators but Mr Rock says the latest equipment comes with sensors which adjust height according to weather.

Surprisingly, the fountain is the least expensive part of the project. Estimates to excavate a pumping chamber in the centre and to install a high-pressure fountain, with a nozzle creating a hollow jet of water 14cm wide, have been in the region of £133,000, Rock says, and the cost of running the pump will be extra. "If the fountain ran all day every day the electricity bills would be £200,000 a year," Rock says, "but we are thinking of running it more sporadically."

The original outline of the Round Pond has been eroded over the years and the edge varies in thickness. Mr Whitfield argues that the original shape should be restored and edged with Portland stone, which would cost about £1.2 million. The other main elements of the plan — a garden south of the Palace and a children's playground — as well as moving the gates, could cost up to £8 million.

Sir Jocelyn is emphatic that something must be done. "Last year the ground in front of the palace was stamped down so hard the grass would not grow." He is concerned it will happen on each anniversary of the princess's death. "Let's turn this accident into something wonderful."

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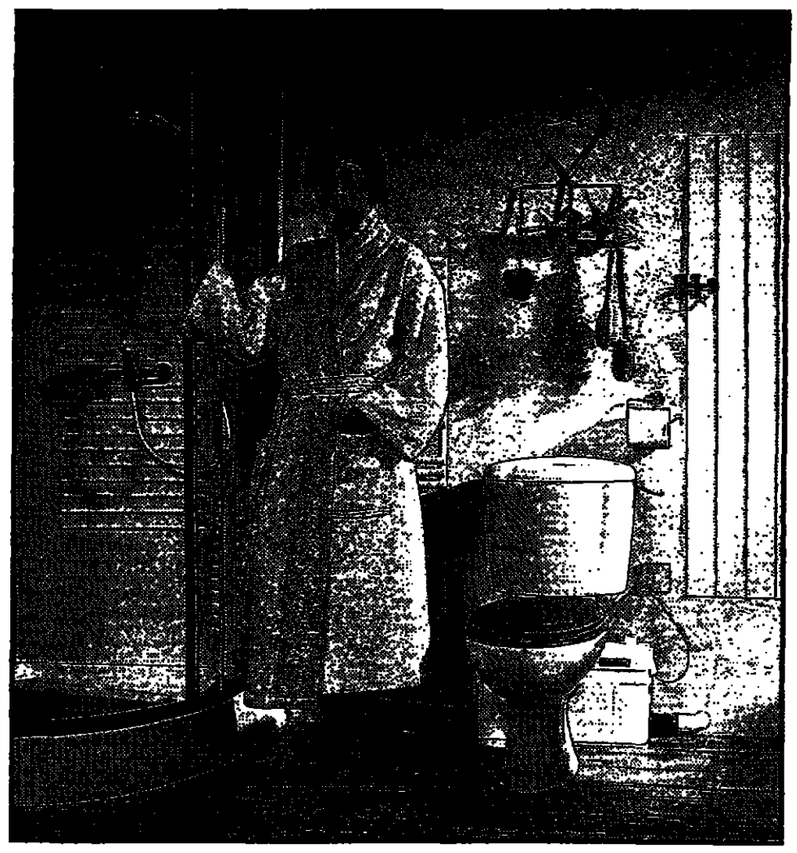
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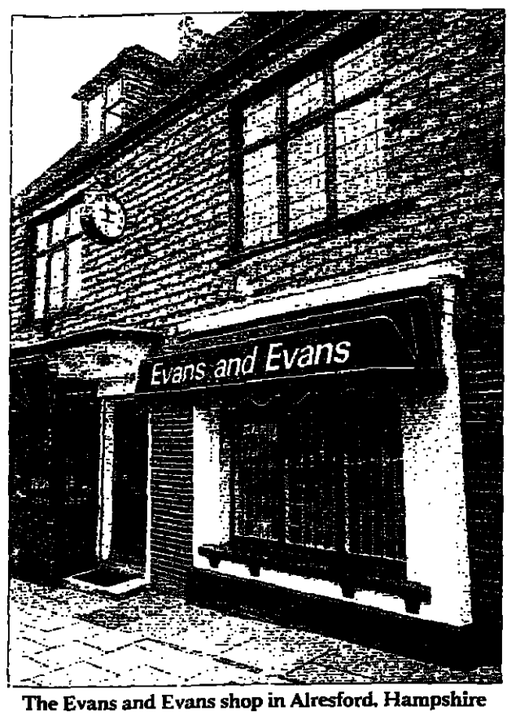
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The Evans and Evans shop in Alresford, Hampshire

CHRISTOPHER BARKER



David Gower with Noel Evans, left and David Evans in their clock-filled shop. Gower has a penchant for elegant timepieces: "They're beautiful to look at and I love the sound"

Secret of Gower's perfect timing

What makes the former England captain tick – and fume?

Michael Cable faces up to him in a clock shop

my favourite shop

Timing was always such a feature of his apparently effortless strokeplay that it seems particularly appropriate that David Gower should have a liking for antique clocks. "They're such beautiful things to look at and I love the sound," says the 41-year-old former England captain, cocking an ear to the background tickings and chimes at Noel and David Evans' shop in Alresford, Hampshire, not far from his home.

Gower first went there two years ago in search of a birthday present for his wife, Thorunn, and came away with an antique French carriage clock. "It was made by Henri Jacot in about 1890 and, apart from being very pretty, it has a marvellous chime, which sounds as though it's coming from something five times the size," he says.

He says he has always had decorative clocks around him: one aunt still has the very ornate French mantel clock which he remembers from childhood, along with the fine old long-case clock that his grandmother had in her entrance hall. "The hall was very long and amplified the sound of the tick, so it could be heard wherever you were in the house," he says.

Admiring the 40 or so long-cases standing against the walls of Evans and Evans' two-storey shop, with price tags ranging from around £3,000 for a classic "grandfather" to £26,500 for one dating from 1685, he says he would love to have a proper old-fashioned model. "But it is a question of space," he says. "In my house, it would look all wrong."

The love of mechanics seems to run in the family — while he marvels at the workings of a handsome early Victorian long-case regulator, accurate to within three seconds a month, Thorunn and their two daughters Alexandra, four, and Samantha, almost two, are enthralled by a pair of clockwork singing birds in a cage.

The owners of the shop — 58-year-old David Evans and his distant cousin, Noel, who is 61 and was apprenticed as a watchmaker at 16 — set up shop together 30 years ago. Noel is a keen cricket fan and great admirer of his customer today, one of the highest-scoring and most graceful batsmen in Test history.

With his good looks and talent on the pitch, the left-handed Gower might appear like a man who never had to try too hard. But his laid-back attitude — including a disdain for the mundane aspects of net practice — didn't always go down well with the cricketing establishment.

During his time as England captain he was criticised in Wisden as "a dilettante". Then there was the infamous Tiger Moth incident — when he left the ground during a 1991 tour of Australia, hired a Tiger Moth at an airfield next door and "buzzed" the square with colleagues Robin Smith and Allan Lamb at the wicket.

A stony-faced England management failed to see the funny side of it and fined him heavily. Their reaction, which hastened the end of a 117-cap Test career during which he scored more than 8,000 runs, including 18 centuries, still rankles with Gower. "It should have been just a slap on the wrist," he says. "After all, what damage did it do? None. Things were never the same after that. It was a turning point in my career."

As captain he succeeded in winning the Ashes but also presided over two ignominious series defeats by the West Indies, including the infamous 5-0 "blackwash" in 1985/86, so he has every sympathy for the most recent scapegoat, Mike Atherton. "The problem Atherton has had throughout his captaincy is that he has always been a player or two short of a proper Test team," he says.

Nominating Alec Stewart as his choice to succeed Atherton, he adds: "Changing the leader usually provides only a short-term lift, at best. If you haven't got the players, especially if you haven't got a top-class bowling line-up, you will struggle, no matter how good a captain you are, no matter how good a motivator."

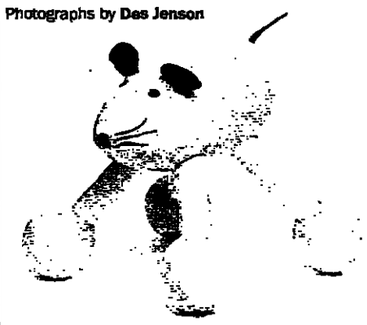
Despite this, he can't imagine any candidate turning down what has come to be regarded as the toughest job in sport. "The whole essence of being a sportsman is the competition, the readiness to rise to the challenge. If you shirk the challenge of the captaincy, you are admitting to a weakness that will probably show in the way you play the sport."

Once it was clear that his Test career was over, the former Leicestershire and Hampshire star retired from the game and, in the four years since, has not picked up a bat. "Once you have enjoyed success at the highest level, it is impossible to get any satisfaction from playing at a lower level," he says.

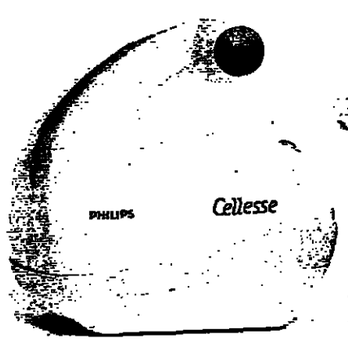
Apart from his work as a commentator for the BBC and Sky, he is a regular on the laddish sports quiz *They Think It's All Over*, where his image as a gentleman among players makes him the good-natured butt of mockery from the other team members. "It's fine for them to take the mickey on the show, but if you came up to me in the street and tried the same thing I'd take a different view," he says, a hint of steel behind the smile.

● *Evans and Evans, 40 West Street, Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9AU. (07000 653256). Open: Friday 9am-1pm; 2pm-5.30pm, Saturday 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm. Other times by appointment.*

Photographs by **Des Jenson**



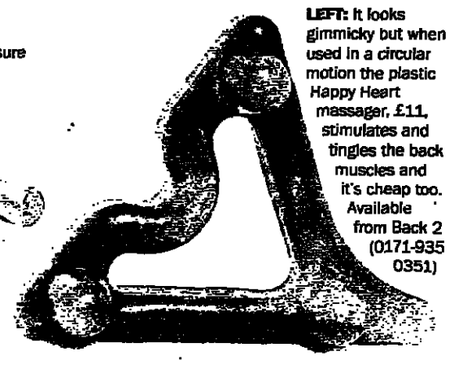
ABOVE: The wooden Opal Massage Mouse, £7.95, has enlarged, circular paws to use on tense muscles. Be careful though, it is fragile. Available from Liberty (0171-734 1234)



BELOW: Fashioned like a rolling pin, the Culti aluminium and natural wood massager, £35, allows a two-handed action for maximum pressure application. From Selfridges (0171-629 1234)



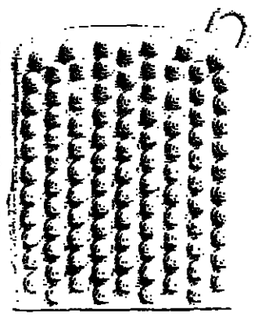
LEFT: The power-operated Philips Cellesse HP5230 is supposed to "roll" over cellulite, sucking it up into a vacuum. For £129, a gym membership may be more beneficial. From Argos (0990 600161 for stockists)



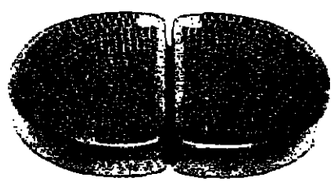
LEFT: It looks gimmicky but when used in a circular motion the plastic Happy Heart massager, £11, stimulates and tingles the back muscles and it's cheap too. Available from Back 2 (0171-935 0351)

Heavenly homebodies

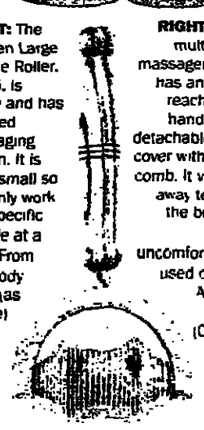
RIGHT: Soaping up and scrubbing down with the rubber Body Buddy mit, £3.95, makes for an invigorating shower session. From the Body Shop (01903 731500)



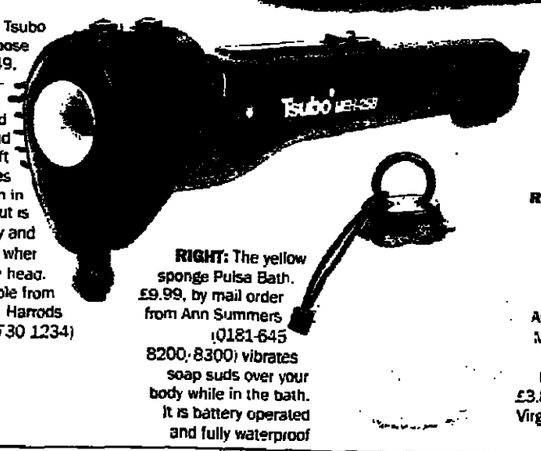
BELOW: Filled with air, the rubber Step Fit, £59.99, has tiny cones giving the feeling of walking on a pebbly beach. A foot massager and a form of exercise. From The Back Shop (0171-935 9120)



RIGHT: The wooden Large Muscle Roller, £4.95, is sturdy and has a ridged massaging bobbin. It is quite small so can only work one specific muscle at a time. From The Body Shop (as before)



RIGHT: The Tsubo multi-purpose massager, £149, has an easy-reach long handle and detachable head cover with a soft comb. It vibrates away tension in the body but is noisy and uncomfortable when used on the head. Available from Harrods (0171-730 1234)



RIGHT: The yellow sponge Pulse Bath, £9.99, by mail order from Ann Summers (0181-645 8200, 8300) vibrates soap suds over your body while in the bath. It is battery operated and fully waterproof

A good massage is hard to find. Whether you crave pain relief, adult entertainment or toxin expulsion, professional massage therapists are not always available at short notice. If, however, you own a hand-held massager, minor aches and pains can be relieved in your own home immediately.

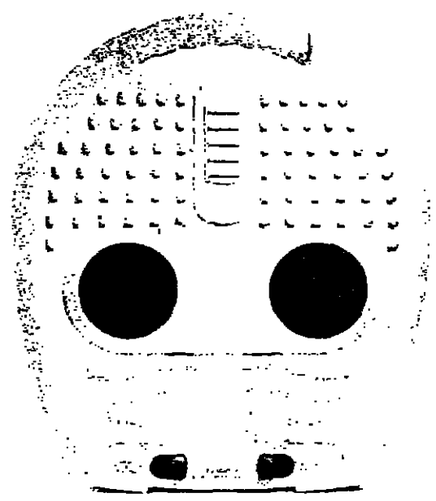
A foot massage can be performed in front of the TV but for a full-body stress release, a relaxing atmosphere is a must. "Make sure you are in a warm room with no draughts," says Wendy Cavanagh, director of The London College of Massage. "Take the phone off the hook, keep the lights low and play soft music."

She advises working on the floor on a comfortable mattress and waiting an hour after eating. Technique is important. "Massage increases the efficiency of circulation to the heart and helps the lymph glands eliminate toxins, so strokes should always work towards the heart. Use stronger pressure on the upstroke and less on the down stroke. Start on the backs of the legs and end on the tummy."

To learn more about massage, Fiona Harrold's *The Massage Manual* (Connections) or *The Complete Book of Massage* by Clare Maxwell-Hudson (Dorling Kindersley) offer in-depth instruction on the different techniques.

MARY ANN PERCY

MASSAGERS



ABOVE: The white plastic Foot Massager from Carmen (0161-947 3000 for stockists) sits comfortably under a desk and can be used to vibrate, heat or rotary massage your feet, £39.99. If you can't stand your feet being tickled it will drive you crazy



RIGHT: Despite its 41 massaging feet, the plastic Ladybug massager, £12.50, is more of a novelty than a massaging tool. From The Home Place (0181-200 5588)



LEFT: To loosen the soft tissue of the muscles in your back, the Rola Stretcher, £79, made of solid beech, requires you to roll along it while lying on your back – difficult to master. By mail order from Enanef Ltd (01306 731651)



RIGHT: Espa Massage Oil, £21 (100ml), from Harvey Nichols (0171-235 5000). Cellulite Massage Oil, £3.95 (60ml), from The Body Shop (01903 731500). Aveda Beautifying Composition Massage Oil, £16 (60ml), from Space NK (0171-299 4999). Neals Yard Base Massage Oil, £3.85 (100ml) (0171-627 1949). Virgin Vie Peace Massage Oil, £8 (125ml) (0870-909 9095)

SHOP WATCH

■ **Czech & Speake**, known for its luxurious bathrooms, has a new Direct service. The freephone number (0800 919728) guarantees 48-hour delivery. A brochure costs £5.

■ **Karrimor**, of outdoor clothing fame, now has a Fulham flagship store. It sounds gimmicky, but there are shower and ice cubicles for testing the gear, and a website for weather information. Their Fifties-designed canvas daysack is a must for hiking around the shops. Karrimor is at 899-901 Fulham Rd, London SW6 (0171-731 8899).

■ **Tesco Direct**'s fans are spreading the word. Why buzz around the supermarkets, when you can shop in the Internet, with home delivery just £5? If you're not on-line, you can fax or telephone. There's one snag — it's not yet countrywide. Call 0345 225533 for information.

■ **Patrick Cox** is coming to Manchester, joining the likes of Joseph and Armani, in early May. His new shop promises to be pale and modern, although housed in a Victorian gothic building. Expect the full works, including his clothing range and the Wannabe label. The shop is at 81 King Street, Manchester (0171-235 5599 for details).



Patrick Cox in Manchester

■ **Architectural Plants** in Sussex attracts "more adventurous gardeners," says owner Angus White, especially those with an urban plot or a tropical bent. He stocks evergreens in strong shapes, from pyramid topiary to spiky exotics, that look good all year round. Find the evergreens at Nuthurst, Horsham, West Sussex (01403 891772). Mail order available.

■ UPDATE: The sparkling new **Barkers** of Kensington opens its stores this week, after a major revamp ... For simple, pretty homewares, try the latest **House** summer catalogue (01258 454884).

GADGETS



BRING the glamour of a hotel washroom into the home with the Magic-Hand Hand Dryer, which is a domestic hot-air dryer operated by a movement detector alongside the nozzle. It works like an over-zealous hair-dryer and takes about 30 seconds to do the job properly.

Wherever you would prefer not to provide linen towels — like in the guest loo or by the garage sink — the Magic-Hand, right, is an effective and more hygienic alternative. Roughly 8in long and 6in wide and deep, the dryer weighs 600g and is wall-mounted.

The device, which is made in Germany, comes with or without mains plug — although, if it is to be hung in a bathroom or lavatory and if you are as incompetent at DIY as I am, get a professional electrician to install it.

Another handy aid is the self-sticking Post-it Memo Board from 3M, which does away with drawing pins. Notices, memos, drawings or all other pieces of paper stick to the tacky surface on contact. This is held in place permanently until being peeled off again, often without leaving a trace. To clean, wrap sticky tape around your finger and dab away marks. The 22in by 18in board can be fixed to a wall with double-sided adhesive pads provided.

TIM WAPSHOTT

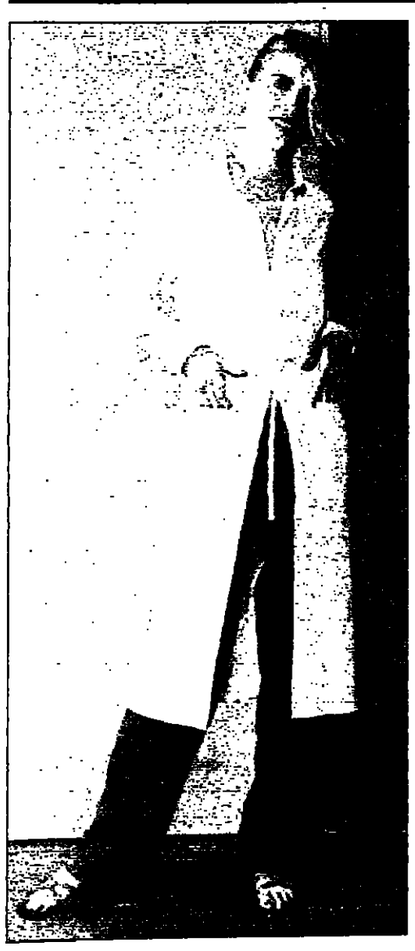
● *Magic-Hand Hand Dryer, £59.99 including p&p from Inter Market (07000 781705). Post-it Memo Board, £24.65 from 3M (01234 268868).*

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Airing your linen in public

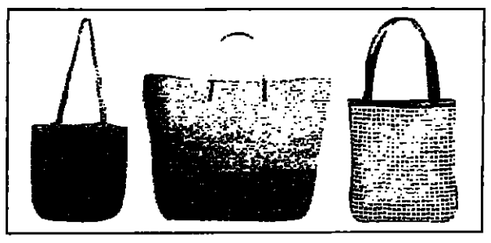












THREE OF A KIND

LEFT: Natural raffia shoulder bag, £12.99, Accessonze (0171-313 3000)

CENTRE: Steel-handled raffia shopper, £29.95, Margaux Alsako, Fenwicks (0171-629 9161)

RIGHT: Dark brown leather and raffia shoulder bag, from £290, Etro (0171-495 5767)

Despite this being the summer of the material girl — the season when the woman swathed in burnt, crinkled, shiny or fringed fabric will shine — natural fibres will still be favourites on our high streets.

High-tech new fabrics may be winging their way into our wardrobes, but British women still like wearing natural fibres, such as linen. "Natural yarns are incredibly beautiful," says Anne Storey, whose first summer collection features several linens. "Although it is traditional, linen can also be mixed with other fibres or dyed to look modern. So it is very versatile."

Storey is not alone in producing a collection that features linen. Ally Capellino uses pink and purple shades for her soft vests, skirts and trousers; Nicole Farhi vibrant reds and aubergines as well as tans and black for her soft, fluid shapes; Hussein Chalayan white and grey for his highly sculpted pieces.

And not all the linen this year is being used for that British perennial, the crumpled suit; there are also ultra-contemporary designs. Storey, for example, has designed a super-fine tucked white shirt, perfect for this summer's layering effects; Marks & Spencer a sharply cut A-line cross-neck shift dress; Monsoon a floor-length five-button tailored linen coat.

And those worried about looking too crinkled should take heart — several designers are producing silk/wool-linen mixes, which retain the natural look without being too creased. "And the great thing about most linen," Storey says, "is that you can just wash it. I just chuck my old white linen trousers in the machine with a bit of bleach — and they still look fantastic."

LISA GRAINGER



TOP RIGHT: Blue and white linen shirt jacket, £100, Blanca, Selfridges, W1 (0171-629 1234). Pale blue boat-neck stretch T-shirt, £29.99; and grey two-tone pencil skirt, £45, Giant, Selfridges, as before. Chocolate snake-skin kitten-heel slingbacks, £135, Joseph Azagury, 8 Thayer Street, W1 (0171-486 9540)

TOP LEFT: Stone boat-neck linen dress, £80, French Connection branches nationwide (0171-399 7200). Gold leather criss-cross sandals, £40, Ravel, 184-188 Oxford Street, W1, and nationwide (0171-436-3126)

ABOVE RIGHT: White linen tunic top, £189, Escada, 194-195 Sloane St, SW1 (0171-580 6066). White linen pedalpushers, £35, Tattoo, Selfridges, as before. Red leather wedge flip-flops, £29.99, Next nationwide (0345 100500)

ABOVE CENTRE: Grey and cream embroidered linen jacket, £560, Favourbrooks, 18 Piccadilly Arcade, SW1 (0171-491 2337). Grey two-tone pedalpushers, £39.99, Giant, as before. Grey satin pumps, £175, Gina, 189 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2932)

ABOVE LEFT: White cesaria linen long shirt, £190, Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-590 6200). Olive green linen trousers, £45, Racing Green (mail order, 0990 411111). Red leather sandals, £30, Marks and Spencer, selected stores (0171-935 4422)

LEFT: Pale blue silk and linen mix shirt, £50; and rust linen trousers, £65, Nougat, 86 Margaret Street, W1 (0171-631 8444)

Photographs by Anna Stevenson
Hair and make-up by Firyal Arnell, using Clinique
Styling by Amandip Uppal Model: Helen Williams

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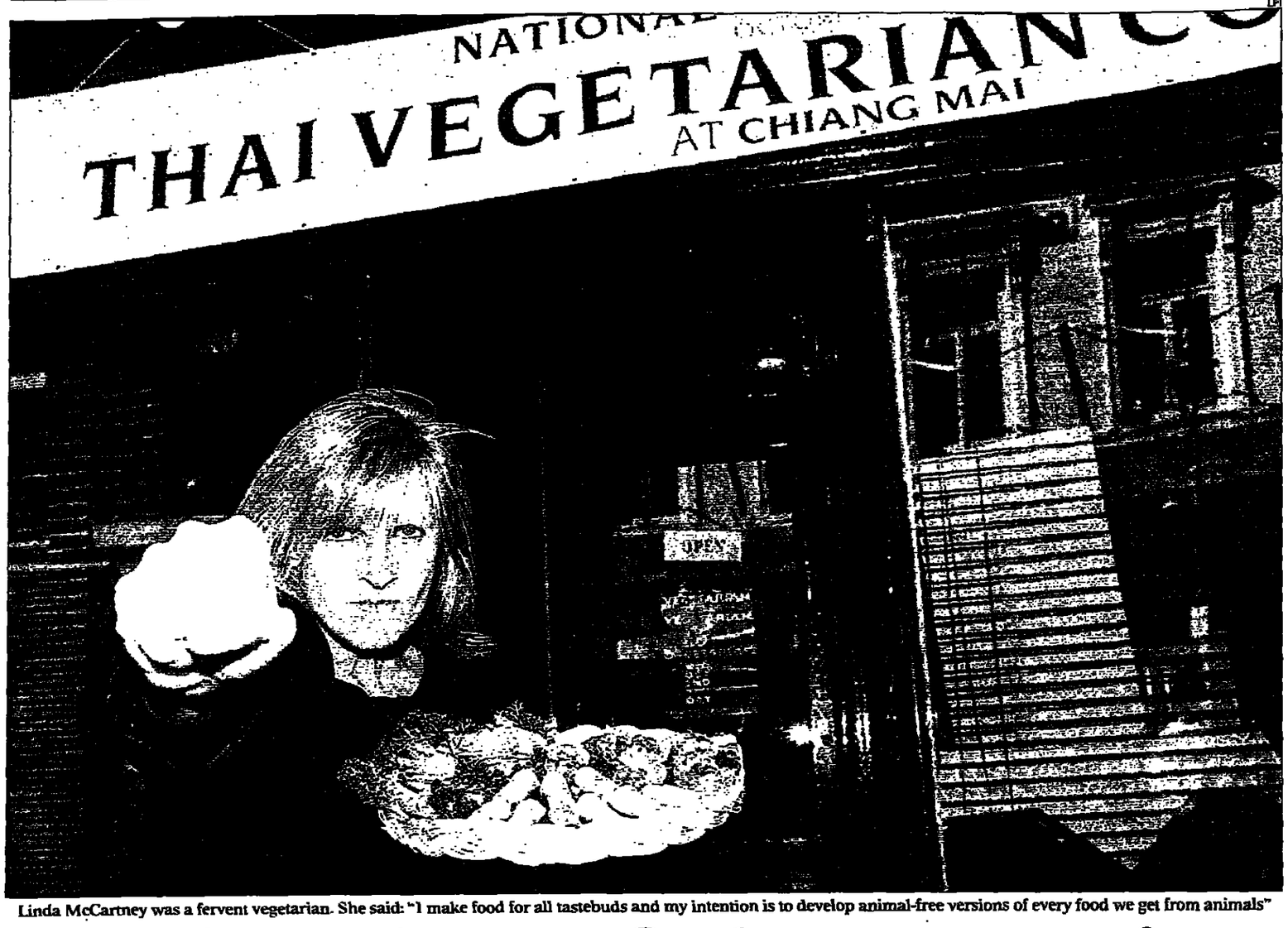
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Linda McCartney was a fervent vegetarian. She said: "I make food for all tastebuds and my intention is to develop animal-free versions of every food we get from animals"

Defender of the veggies

Matthew Brace

assesses the influence of Linda McCartney on the nation's eating habits



The McCartneys on their wedding day in 1969. The couple decided to give up meat 20 years ago

A press release promoting Linda McCartney's most recent range of vegetarian foods was issued last week and contained probably her last quoted words. Three days later, she was dead from cancer.

The release raved about meat-free dishes, dairy-free frozen desserts and yoghurts (Vegan-friendly), and a "bacon-style slice for a delicious no-meat bacon-buttie" — perfect for the 13,000 people who give up red meat each week, according to a recent Gallup poll.

"I'm making food for all tastebuds," said Lady McCartney, "and my intention is to develop animal-free versions of every food we get from animals.

"Some people say I'm cranky and that only cranks care about animals but 50 per cent of 14 to 16-year-old girls are vegetarian. Are half the schoolgirls of Britain cranks? The growing numbers of vegetarian children are the brightest hope for animals.

"Every 2.3 seconds a child dies of starvation somewhere in the world, the grain we could have fed him having been used to fatten livestock. My name might help sell the product once but if it didn't taste good they would never come back."

In 1995 she made her own contribution to helping the war victims of Bosnia when she sent them a million of her veggie burgers and said: "If I can feed a million mouths, the rest of the food industry should follow suit."

In December of the same year she paid £3,000 to save a 28lb turkey from ending up on the Christmas dinner table. She said later that she would have paid up to £10,000.

Were these soundbites from a celebrity, dabbling part-time in the worthy world of ethical food or a strong message from a dedicated meat-is-murder revolutionary?

In the past, Linda McCartney was looked on as a bit of a food amateur. It all began 20 years ago when she and Paul were tucking into a lamb dinner at one of their homes and glanced out of the window to see living relatives of their evening meal gambolling in a field. From then on they were vegetarians.

Her food products business, which manufactured porkless sausages, meatless pies and chickenless Kievs, began in 1991 and everything went swimmingly until the manufacturers, McVitie's Prepared Foods, were fined £2,250 after pies containing meat were found in a Linda McCartney box labelled "suitable for vegetarians". The company admitted three offences of falsely labelling goods. Then in 1995, ITV's investigative programme *The Big Story* disclosed that her beefless burgers contained more than twice the amount of fat that the packet's ingredients list admitted.

While the list said 11.2 per cent, laboratory tests proved that it was in fact between 20 and 22.7 per cent and thousands of packets were whisked off the shelves.

However, as Lyndel Costain, a nutritionist and spokeswoman for the British Dietetic Association, pointed out, her celebrity status had a lot to do with the publicity surrounding the food gaffes.

"It's not that unusual to get this kind of labelling error, so it probably made the headlines because of her name," she said.

"But then her name obviously helped to sell the goods too. A lot of people shopping would say, 'oh we'll try that, it's Linda McCartney's stuff'. She was one of the pioneers of vegetarian convenience food and I'm sure she helped out a lot of stressed parents trying to find suitable food for their vegetarian children."

The association was not alone in its praise of Lady Linda's food empire, which sold an estimated three million products a week. Chris Dessent, of the Vegetarian Society, described her as "a visionary who, more than anybody else, changed the way people regarded vegetarian food". Kevin Viner, the 1998 National Chef of the year, said: "She brought vegetarians into restaurants and supermarkets."

Henry Harris, *The Times* columnist and head chef at the fifth-floor in Harvey Nichols in west London, met the release of her first products with incredulity but eventually warmed to her. "I'm not exactly known for my tolerance of vegetarian foods on the market, it looks like her wish will be fulfilled, by some people at least.

accessible to lorry drivers. Her products were pastiches of sausages and shepherd's pies. I hope she is remembered for them."

However, she was not so fondly thought of by the meat lobby. Charles Boyd, a caterer and spokesman for the Backbone Party, a group opposing the Government's beef-on-the-bone ban, said she was a thorn in the side of meat-eaters.

"Linda McCartney's death is very sad but I think she represented what meat-eaters don't like about vegetarians," said Mr Boyd. "She wanted people to stop eating meat altogether. Now, I like vegetarian food and I eat three vegetarian meals a week but then I also eat raw steak. I like the balance and I object to somebody telling me what I can and cannot eat."

The Meat and Livestock Commission said that it was sad to hear of her death, although it had not agreed with her views. Not surprisingly, it was cagey about discussing her contribution to the food industry.

Linda McCartney certainly had culinary influence. Last autumn, when she was invited to a £6,000-a-head dinner for a New York charity, Citymeals-on-Wheels, she agreed to go on condition that no one ate fish or meat. The organisers buckled and diners were treated to plates of organic carrots and shallow-fried bean sprouts. After all that, she did not turn up.

The influence she undoubtedly had while she was alive looks likely to continue. McVitie's Prepared Foods said this week: "The family is determined to continue the development and expansion of Linda's meat-free brand that she loved and believed in so passionately, and we will be working closely with them to make sure that these wishes are carried out."

Sir Paul, in his statement on Tuesday, said that the tribute his wife would have liked best would be for people to go vegetarian. With the myriad of food scares during the past couple of years, this decade's obsession with health, and the proliferation of vegetarian foods on the market, it looks like her wish will be fulfilled, by some people at least.

Drink



Jane MacQuitty

A mouthful of chilled riesling will instantly summon up the sweet scents and tastes of summer

I love the riesling grape. You, so wine merchants claim, loathe it. But with spring a washout and summer likely to go the same way, the racy riesling, all mouth-wateringly sprightly, floral fruit, may be the only chance any of us get to summon up summer.

Apart from being one of the most crisply refreshing summer whites, the riesling grape has an aristocratic Teutonic lineage that makes chardonnay look like a Burgundian peasant. Riesling is the one white variety that takes its aristocratic characteristics with it wherever it is planted; including Australia, California and New Zealand.

When young, riesling delivers juicy, floral, verdant, herby flavours often reminiscent in the Mosel of lime and in the Rhine of peach. Super-ripe riesling from Germany has an almost hothouse musky, muscat-grape quality. New World versions have an extra dollop of equally tongue-tingling citrus fruit that in extreme examples have an exotic mango taste.



Like other great grapes, riesling grows old gracefully, acquiring extra concentration, complexity and flavour for many years. Indeed, the top sweet late harvest auslese, beerenauslese and trockenbeerenauslese bottles from Germany can go on improving for half a century or more. Anyone who has tasted these extraordinary honeyed, spicy, lime-licked bottles, often overlaid with a rich petrolly quality, will not forget them.

Newcomers to German wine worry about this petrol aspect but it is part and parcel of this great wine style, unmistakable and for many people it proves to be a quickly acquired taste. Even the drier late harvest German styles of kabinett and spätlese can and do improve for 10 to 15 years with lime and petrol flavours to the fore. In addition, top rieslings have an uncanny ability to reflect the precise soil and climate of where they come from and the weather they have endured that season. All of which combines to make them Mother Nature's, not man's, *tour de force*.

Another sunny attribute of the riesling grape that comes in handy now is its low alcohol content. Mosel rieslings can weigh in as little as 7 or 8 per cent alcohol and rarely get to 11 per cent or above. This means that you and yours can easily knock back a bottle at lunchtime and start again in the evening without any ill effects. Useful for those who enjoy summer sports. And I find the riesling grape more refreshing than most on very hot days because, along with the lower alcohol, the best single estate grown rieslings deliver a blast of tingling acidity balanced by plenty of fruit that remains toothsome even when deeply chilled.

Don't just take my word for it. Laytons has just released its opening offer of the 1997 German wine vintage. Several of the big names are here, including my favourite Ruwer estate, C Von Schubert's Maximin Grünhaus. The Germans claim that this is their tenth top vintage in a row. Suffice it to say that there are lower yields because of frost and this can only benefit the quality of the wines that were produced. Contact them on 0171-388 4567.

Instead, for immediate drinking go for proven earlier vintages such as the splendid 95s and 96s that are on shelf now. The best value kabinett I have come across is Bert Simon's delectable, steely, lime-scented 1995 Serrig Herrenberg Riesling from the Mosel (Fullers, £5.99). Equally mouth-wateringly good value is Messmer's gloriously vibrant, floral 1996 Müller-Thurgau (Oddbins, £6.99). The New World equivalent is the stylish 1997 Villa Maria Private Bin Riesling from New Zealand, with typical verdant, herby Marlborough region finesse, coupled with a glorious floral grapefruit quality, permanently down 50p from Thresher, Wine Rack and Bottoms Up at £4.99 — and given away at the price. From the same region is the 1996 Stoneleigh Vineyard whose delicious soft style is already showing those classic, aged riesling hallmarks of lime and petrol (Thresher Group, £4.99).

Australia's equivalent at £3.99 from Thresher, Oddbins, Wine Cellar and Berkeley Wines is the appealing 1997 Penfolds Rawson's Retreat Bin 202 South Australia Riesling, a sweeter, riper, juicier wine reminiscent of sherbet dabs and lemon curd.

But for the real German thing, you need to trade up to one of the sensational von Kesselstatt estate wines from the Mosel. My current favourite is the rich, waxy, mouth-watering spice of their 1995 Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese (Sainsbury's £7.99, Safeway carry the 1996 for £7.95) — a very sprightly summer aristocrat.

THE DRINKS THAT TIME FORGOT

Blue Curaçao

ALTHOUGH Lucas Bols opened his Amsterdam gin distillery in 1575, teenage tipplers were to have a long wait for the sweet taste of a Blue Lagoon cocktail.

The island of Curaçao off the Venezuelan coast provided Dutch seafarers with the dried peel of its uniquely bitter, green oranges to enthuse the sweet liqueur that took its name, and which, topped up with grape brandy spirit, became a staple cocktail creation.

Vivid blue Bols Curaçao (with additional sweet Valencia peel and, I am afraid, good old-fashioned artificial colouring) was not available in bottles until the 1960s, when it unleashed a flood of blue concoctions on the dwindling cocktail crowd.

Of these, the Blue Lagoon proved the stayer. Its pedigree is impressive. Andy MacElhone, son of Harry, of Harry's New York Bar fame, in Paris was the creator, perhaps inspired by the previous decade's film of teenage love among the palms, starring Jean Simmons.

As lemonade replaced the fresh lemon juice and vodka that MacElhone had originally used, the colourful highball swept through the ached English ranks in the 1970s.

Despite the love story getting a second bite of the cherry — the Eighties remake of the film starred Brooke Shields as principal pubescent — Blue Lagoons did not feature in the cocktail revival of the Thatcher years.

Desert island dreams of adolescent innocence were, like lunch, strictly for wimps. The Blue Lagoon will last have been sighted, ignominiously perhaps, with a decorative cocktail umbrella in one of those pub conversions called "Farty's" or some such, that seemed to be everywhere so recently.



KATE STRONACH

HENRY HARRIS'S CHEAT OF THE WEEK

HAVING been trained as a chef, there are certain techniques and practices that I take for granted. I used to drive my mother to distraction with suggestions that she should whip up a chicken mousse as a garnish for some Eighties classic, that would involve Dover sole fillets and, not inconceivably, some fruit. Luckily, my guests here on the fifth floor at Harvey Nichols have grown up and such ideas have been consigned to the scrap heap of naffness.

However, there are certain kitchen staples that do involve some technique, but also require confidence. Mayonnaise is the one "ingredient" in the repertoire of experience that can trip up the home cook. I love mayonnaise: its lush velvety richness lends itself so well to a whole host of things — poached salmon and new potatoes, thin crispy chips, sandwiches and salads.

Among my top five is celery, roulade. This classic hors d'oeuvre is a spaghetti-like pile of shredded raw celeriac bound with a mustardy mayonnaise, frequently served on its own or perhaps as an accompaniment to some cold meats. Oh yes, the cheat. We'll worry about teaching you not to be scared of "mayo" on another day.



For the moment let's dive into the fridge and pull out a jar of good French-style mayonnaise that someone else has gone to the trouble of making. Hellmans does a very good one. I've changed this classic by adding some red onion to the roulade. If this doesn't appeal then leave it out, and as a garnish, wafer thin slices of rosette d'Lyon, (a French sausisson sec). If you can't get hold of any, then a good Italian salami will work equally well.

CELERY ROULADE
Serves 6 to 8

One whole ball of celeriac, one small red onion peeled, about 200g of mayonnaise from a jar, 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard, 2 tablespoons anchovy essence, juice of half a lemon, 18-24 thin slices of your favourite salami/sausisson.

Carefully trim all the skin off the celeriac, cut the ball in half and then cut each half into wafer thin slices and then into the finest of strips.

Transfer to a bowl, cut the union in half and then finely slice both halves and transfer to the bowl with the next four ingredients. Mix everything well with your hands and give it a good milling of pepper.

Check the seasoning. Depending on the strength of your mustard you might want to add some more.

Leave for 30 minutes for the flavours to develop and then divide onto plates and garnish with the sausisson.

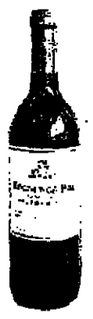
A few glasses of lightly chilled beaujolais go rather well with this.

● *The author is head chef at Harvey Nichols fifth-floor restaurant in Knightsbridge*

STAR BUYS

1996 Penfolds Koonunga Hill, South Australia, Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon, Tesco (£6.49), Oddbins, Thresher, Majestic and Sainsbury's, £6.99.

Originally sold as Koonunga Hill Claret and 21 this year, the latest KH vintage is every bit as big and bold as its predecessors. It's ripe, tarry, black fruit style makes it a warming red on these seemingly never-ending cold April days, and, later on, the ideal bottle with a barbecue



1994 Copertino Rosso, Waitrose, £4.45.

With April rained off so far, and red wine consumption still on the increase, we all need beefy reds to see us through. Copertino comes from a town of the same name in Italy's hot, dry, heel Puglia, where plots of old negroamaro grapes produce some splendid, hefty, savoury reds. This garnet-red 94, with lots of ripe, beef tea-scented fruit, is one of the best Copertino vintages



BEST OF THE REST

Safeway's wine fair runs from Monday to May 23. The 94 Margaux is down £1 to £6.99, and Rosemount's 1996 Cabernet is down £1 to £5.99. Safeway's basic 1996 Vin Rouge is down 90p to £1.99 and the 1997 Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche drops £1 to £2.29. 1996 Vina Malea Viura is down 50p to £2.79. And Piper Heidsieck champagne drops £1.50 to £15.49.

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The Times Cook

The best ingredients and methods from around the world are being brought together to create modern fusion cooking



Frances Bissell

Fusion cooking is an area of deep fascination for the cook. It is also fraught with pitfalls. Why put just two or three flavours on a plate when you can mix a palette of seven or eight? And why not visit three continents at the same time? A little tamarind paste, some balsamico, a few shards of lemon grass? Actually, I wrote down the first three ingredients that came to mind: they might almost work together.

Sometimes fusion cooking works well, sometimes it is spectacularly awful. On the whole it works best where there is a sound knowledge of the individual types of cooking being fused. It is important to be aware of both culture and the authentic use of the ingredients being deployed.

American chef Jay McCarthy in San Antonio is an exponent of what he describes as Caribbean Rim cooking. Having been born and brought up in Jamaica, now cooking in Texas, he is well-versed in both culinary cultures and cooks



with a sure touch. So, too, does classically trained French chef Jean Georges Vongerichten, having worked for a long time in Thailand before going to America. There he was encouraged by open-minded American culinary practices to open Vong, a fusion of French cooking and Thai flavours, first in Manhattan, then in London, and in Hong Kong last September, where many cooks first learn to cook fusion-style.

Having spent a good deal of time in kitchens in the Far East, I feel comfortable using oriental flavours in my own kitchen, and am glad that all the ingredients I need are now more readily available than they used to be.

Packets of ready selected Thai herbs, for example, are most useful. And coconut milk is an excellent ingredient in soups. My tomato soup is a "fusion" version of the tomato, lovage and garlic soup I often cook in the summer; Thai lime leaves and ginger replace the lovage and garlic, and coconut the milk or cream.

Fusion cooking has been around for longer than we might think. What I call "organic" fusion cooking goes back several hundred years at least. Dutch, British and Indonesian fused long ago into the unique, subtle and spicy Cape Malay cooking to be found in Cape Town.

The French in Kerala left their influence on the food, as did the British throughout the subcontinent. In Colombo I once asked for a typical Sri Lankan meal, and I was given roast chicken and gravy, cabbage, cauliflower and roast potatoes, with a caramel custard for dessert. But I could as easily have been given dishes which reflected the Portuguese or Dutch influence in the kitchen.

Islands and other outposts are often a rich source of organic fusion cooking. In Malta one finds not only the British legacy of boiled vegetables, but Arabic influences in the sweet almond pastries. One of the most unusual examples of fusion cooking is that found in Macau. Portuguese until next year, the colonial influence is very strong, as is the Chinese. This in turn is spiced with a hint of Africa, as in Henri's famous African chicken, said to have been introduced from Portugal's African colonies by sailors who also brought with them the essential hot "piri-piri" sauce. And, of course, our own island's culinary history is a prime example of organic fusion food, with bits and pieces, flavours and techniques acquired from different sources over the centuries.

Modern fusion cooking is a phenomenon mainly of the Anglo-Saxon world, with newer culinary traditions. Kitchens with a strong culinary identity, and I'm thinking of those I know in places as diverse as Andalusia, Quito, Shanghai, Marrakesh, Manila, Colombia and the Basque country, have the confidence to present traditional food without the need for diluting those traditions with imported flavours and techniques.

Chefs in Piemonte and Puglia cook with the ingredients and in the style of their region. The chef from Lyons who goes to cook in Hong Kong does not feel the need on his or her return to introduce ginger and soy sauce to their menu, nor do they start steaming and stir-frying everything. Some might call this dull conservatism, and regret the lack of excitement brought by the introduction of global flavours. Are you ready for "Mediterr-asian"? What about "Dixie-Mex"? And "China-Criolla"?

Mussels in coconut milk with Thai aromatics
Serves 2 as a main course, 4 as a starter

- Approx. 2kg mussels
- 1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 celery stalk, trimmed and finely sliced
- 1 leek, trimmed and thinly sliced
- Small piece of ginger, peeled, thinly sliced and cut into julienne
- 1 or 2 lemon grass stalks, shredded
- 2 lime leaves, shredded
- ½tsp freshly ground pepper
- 200ml coconut milk — from a can or carton
- Fresh basil, mint or coriander for garnish

Scrub the mussels well under cold running water, and remove the beards and any barnacles. Discard any open (dead) mussels.

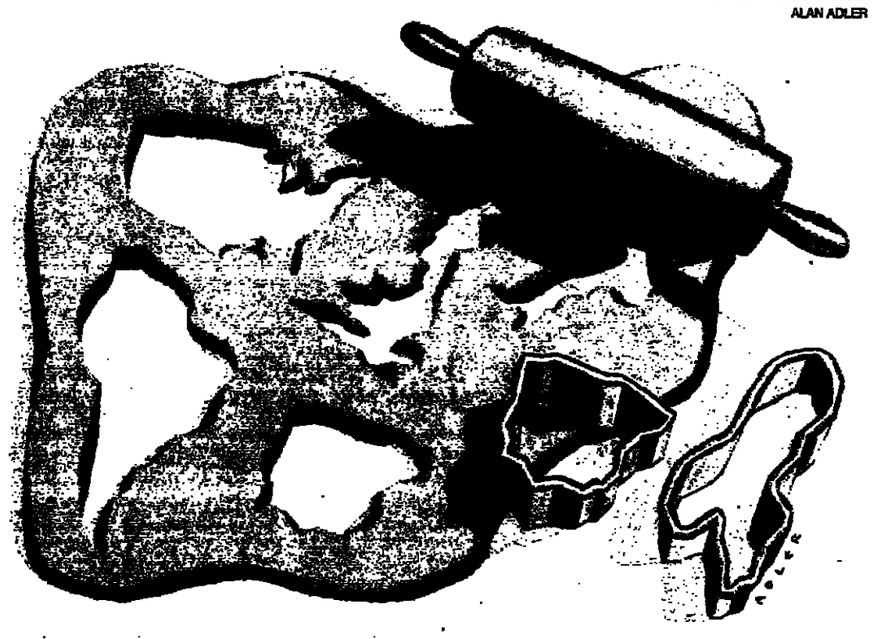
Put the vegetables, aromatics, pepper and coconut milk in a heavy-lidded casserole, bring to the boil, cover, and simmer for a few minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Open the casserole, tip in the well-rinsed mussels, and put the lid back on. Give the casserole a vigorous shake or two to distribute the vegetables and seasoning.

Let the mussels steam for 5 minutes or so. Scatter on the herbs, torn or chopped, and serve from pot with bread to mop up juices. Discard mussels that remain closed.

Tomato and coconut soup with herb dumplings
Serves 6

- Approx. 1kg ripe tomatoes
- 2 or 3 heads of new garlic
- 2tbsp groundnut oil

ALAN ADLER



- 500ml vegetable stock
- 4 lime leaves
- ½tsp freshly grated ginger
- Salt
- Pepper
- 300ml coconut milk or cream

Halve the tomatoes and separate the garlic cloves. Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan, and stir in the tomatoes and garlic. Cook until the juices begin to caramelise slightly, but without browning the vegetables. Add the stock, lime leaves, ginger and seasonings and cook until the garlic is soft. Allow to cool slightly, blend and sieve, and return the liquid to the saucepan. Add the coconut milk, reheat, and adjust the seasoning before serving.

This soup is also excellent chilled, without the dumplings. If you do not want to spend time on the dumplings, garnish the soup with lightly toasted curls of coconut.

Herb dumplings
Serves 6

- 75g soft white breadcrumbs
- 50g unsweetened desiccated coconut
- 50g rice flour
- ½tsp baking powder
- 3-4tbsp finely chopped or grated vegetarian suet
- Grated rind of a lemon
- 3 spring onions, finely chopped
- 2tbsp mixed herbs, mint, basil, coriander, finely chopped
- Seasoning
- 1 free-range egg, lightly beaten

Mix together all the dry ingredients, including the suet. Bind to a soft dough with the egg, and water if necessary. With floured hands, form into small balls. Lower into boiling water or soup, and poach for 15 minutes or so.

Oriental glazed pork chops
Serves 4

- 4 thick pork chops
- 5 or 6 sprigs of fresh mint
- ½tsp each sea salt and Szechuan or black pepper corns
- ½tsp ground ginger
- 1tsp five-spice powder
- 3tbsp fermented Japanese soy sauce
- 1tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1tbsp clear honey
- 1tsp mustard

Trim the pork chops, and snip the fat so that it does not curl.

Strip the leaves from the mint, and roughly tear them. Put in a mortar with the salt, pepper and spices, and grind with a pestle to a paste. Gradually add the liquid, the honey and mustard.

Brush this paste on the chops, and leave for 20 to 30 minutes for the flavours to penetrate the meat.

Heat the grill, and put the chops under it. Turn down the heat after 4 to 5 minutes, and continue cooking for 4 to 5 minutes more. Raise the heat, turn over the meat, and finish the cooking, turning down the heat once more after a few minutes. This is very good with creamy mashed potatoes into which you have stirred plenty of finely chopped spring onion and a little fresh green or red chilli.

© Frances Bissell 1998

NEXT WEEK:
Bank Holiday entertaining

THE PERFECT MACARONI CHEESE

THIS homely dish has been a part of the British repertoire for a long time, a least since the 17th century. It is quite in order to use cheddar cheese, rather than parmesan.

■ YOU NEED for two people: about 250g macaroni, and a cheese sauce made from 25g butter, 25g flour, about 500ml boiling milk and 200g grated cheddar. To season the sauce, use pepper and a generous grating of nutmeg.

■ METHOD: Cook the macaroni for 2-3 minutes fewer than stated on the packet. Drain and mix with the sauce.

Pour into a buttered ovenproof dish, and bake for 10-15 minutes in a hot oven until the top is golden brown.

■ ALTERNATIVES: Slivers of prosciutto, or other ham, and diced, peeled tomato can be added. The dish then resembles the Austrian "Schinkenfleckerl", a similarly comforting dish.

Next week:
The perfect shortbread



CONSUMING INTERESTS: EARL GREY TEABAGS

What constitutes Earl Grey tea? No one seems sure, though Twinings reproduce an endorsement from the sixth Earl Grey saying that his ancestor, the second Earl, was presented with the "exquisite recipe" by an envoy on his return from China. Twinings, though, is among the companies no longer using only China tea for the blend. I have seen Earl Grey teas which were Sri Lankan. In this tasting several of the teas came from nowhere in particular. The only common ingredient was oil of bergamot. Using one tea bag per pot and infusing only a minute usually produced palatable results. ROBIN YOUNG



Twinings Earl Grey, *50 tea bags, 125g, £1.59.*
Claims: "Fine tea from China and India scented with bergamot."
Verdict: Faint scent and though the tea had an oily feel in the mouth, scant flavour. Poor. ★

Asda Earl Grey, *50 tea bags, 125g, for £1.05.*
Claims: "A classic blend of China and other fine teas flavoured with oil of bergamot."
Verdict: The pale brew had a scent of raw potato and though initially clean tasting became brackish on standing. ★★

Tesco Plantation Tea Earl Grey, *50 teabags, 125g, for £1.15.*
Claims: "Fine China teas with a subtle hint of bergamot. Strength 1, Serve with or without milk."
Verdict: The one-per-person and one-for-the-pot brew yielded a fragrant tea that was short and light in flavour. ★★½

Williamson and Magor 50 Earl Grey Tea Bags, *125g, £1.89 from Selfridges.*
Claims: "Fine teas since 1869. Product of China and Sri Lanka."
Verdict: Curious, with a strange, seaweedy smell. Would be an acquired taste, and whether the 2nd Earl Grey ever acquired it, I doubt. ★

Sainsbury's Earl Grey, *50 tea bags for £1.19.*
Claims: "A blend of China and other choice teas with a pale colour and delicate citrus flavour."
Verdict: This was one of the darkest teas. The individual round bags produce tea with a caramel sweet smell and an oily texture. Better with milk. ★★

Safeway Earl Grey, *50 tea bags, 125g, for £1.19.*
Claims: "A blend of choice teas from traditional tea-growing areas flavoured with the natural oil of bergamot fruit. One bag per person, brew 3 to 5 minutes, "serve with a little milk or lemon".
Verdict: A pale, light tea, better without milk. Light, fragrant and easy to drink. ★★★

Whittard of Chelsea Earl Grey, *£2 for 25 tagged teabags.*
Claims: "The classic fragrant tea with bergamot." Strength 2. Ingredients just listed as black tea with oil of bergamot. Various origins.
Verdict: Expensive but well presented, and the only ones to yield a tea comparable to the better loose-leaf Earl Grey blends. To me this was the real thing, and the other claimants to the title mere pretenders. ★★★★½

Waitrose Earl Grey, *£1.19 for 50 tea bags, 125g.*
Claims: "A black China tea with fragrant oil of bergamot. Drink with milk or lemon. Product of China."
Verdict: An earthy, quite gutsy and masculine brew, making an over-sturdy tea. ★★½

Harrods Earl Grey No 42, *£1.50 for 20 tagged and enveloped tea bags, 50g.*
Claims: One bag per pot recommended, but "add milk, sugar or honey to taste". Origin not divulged.
Verdict: Scent of wood smoke and citrus peel. One of the few teas better with milk. ★★½

Duchy Originals Earl Grey, 25 tea bag sachets, *50g, for £1.75.*
Claims: "Royalties from the sale of Duchy Originals benefit the Prince of Wales's Trust. May be served with milk or lemon."
Verdict: A paleish tea, mildly fragrant, rather dull. ★

Harvey Nichols Earl Grey, *£1.60 for 50 tea bags, 125g.*
Claims: "A blend of the finest China teas scented with oil of bergamot — a delicious flavour. This is a traditional favourite usually served without milk."
Verdict: A delicate, though highly scented, rather feminine tea with a boudoir-ish charm. ★★★

MORE FOOD & DRINK IN the times

Isabel Allende on the fruits of passion; Jonathan Meades in Christopher's

An appetite for laughs

Joe Warwick plays straight man to a veteran comedian who likes his food

HOME COOKING



Frank Carson, his wife, Ruth, and his children Majella, Aidan, front, and Tony, at the piano for a sing-along

Although Frank Carson is 72 this year and has spent nearly 50 years as a stand-up comic, he refuses to slow down. "I'll be performing on the central pier in Blackpool this summer; it's about the 15th or 16th season I've done there," he says triumphantly.

He is proud of his staying power, and he is also proud of his children: his daughter Majella, who is 44, and two sons, Aidan, 40, and Tony, 42. Tony has carved out a career for himself in catering, and the King's Road branch of his oriental-themed Jim Thompson's bar-restaurant chain recently won the Carlton Television Award for best London pub-restaurant.

Carson does not take food as seriously as his eldest son, but he undoubtedly loves eating. "I had a healthy appetite as a kid, and I still have — to my cost," he says. "I was born on Saturday; it was one o'clock lunchtime and I've been dying for eating ever since."

Brought up near the docks in Belfast, he was, in his own words, "a fat little boy". He recalls the food he grew up with. "Mostly stew, Irish stew. It was all plain food in those days. Mostly something to fill you up, like bread and potatoes and champ, which was creamed potatoes with spring onion and buttermilk.

"Saturday was the big lunch time. You'd always have a fry on a Saturday, with bacon, eggs and sausages. There was also tongue, which they used to sell, and the old joke was that I'd never know why anyone would want to eat anything out of an animal's mouth." There follows a booming laugh that sounds like it could come from Basil Brush's Belfast cousin.

He has his own theories on why he always had fish on a Friday. "It was fish on a Friday in those days because, according to legend, the cardinal owned all the fishing boats." He's on a roll, and the gags start to flow: "In fact, there was a butcher in Belfast whose sausages contained so little meat that you could eat them on a Friday — there was so much bread in them that you didn't know whether to fry them or butter them."



Carson, winner of the "Gutcha" dieting booby prize

He never touched school dinners, because, "in those days you could get school dinners only if you were on income support. The food was supposed to be left over from hotels from the day before — but I never believed it."

Then there were the Sunday meals at home. "We'd sit down for a big meal and, back then, a pound of steak was only about eight pence. I remember the first chicken we had in my family: it was one of the wonders of the Carson family. I opened the door to see how it was doing, and the fellow from next door was dipping his bread in the gravy." He's off again and I'm powerless to stop him.

In a more serious moment Carson recalls that he used to enjoy helping his mother with the washing. "It was before washing machines, and all of the clothes were put in the bath and you used to have to stand on them and trap them. Your feet used to come up spotlessly clean."

His favourite meal was "nobs and cabbages — the nobs were part of the legs of a cow, you don't see it around much these days. I remember that's when I first got into eating mustard, and I use a tin of mustard a week to this day."

During a summer season in Blackpool a couple of years ago, he went through a stage of eating only vegetables. "I went off eating meat for a bit, not because of BSE, but because I thought vegetables would be better for me." He combined this new diet with his first attempts at cooking, and took to making curries. "They stop you eating so much, because they're very filling, if you put plenty of vegetables in them."

In 1995, his less-than-svelte figure inspired a diet campaign to award him the "Gutcha Prize", and he confesses that he is keen to get into shape. To this end, he explains, he is going into training when he gets to Blackpool this year. "I'm 3st overweight. I'm going to give up the drinking, get on those vegetable curries and play 27 holes of golf every day. At the moment I'm looking like Bernard Manning; when I finish the summer season I'll look like Tom Cruise — or possibly an Atlantic cruise."

'Some say the best thing to put in a catapult and lob at a bird is a small potato, but a Cadbury's Mini-Egg is far more efficient'

The siege of the feathered fiends

DOWN TO EARTH



LUCY PINNEY

Now that spring is here, I am woken each morning by birds — not just the pair of starlings nesting happily above the bedroom window and tend to make loving, inconsequential remarks to each other at 5am — but by a huge, unruly mob of jackdaws, which are absolutely determined to block our front-room chimney.

It always starts at first light: a heavy patter of feet on the roof above our bed, loud mutterings, and then a sudden bang as the first jackdaw arrives with a freshly harvested knobbly stick and begins jabbing it down the chimney. It is like listening to a gang of incompetent builders at work: there are the same worrying noises of falling bricks and plaster, the same long pauses while new strategies are thought out or refreshment breaks taken, the same determination to persist with a bodged plan of attack — and the same ruthless disregard for the feelings of the householders.

I don't dislike jackdaws, it's just that there is no way of reasoning with them or coming to an amicable understanding. Our farm is surrounded by large trees, which they are welcome to nest in, and we even have another chimney — close to their favourite one — which is never used and so would make an ideal jackdaw hatchery. But no: for the jackdaws, only the front-room chimney will do. As we have no central heating, and virtually the only heat source in the house is the fire in the front room, we are reluctant to give way, so each spring sees a titanic struggle for supremacy in which the laurels go to the most ruthless party.

Over the years I have grown weary of the way the jackdaws always win, so in December we made a special effort and embedded a piece of mesh in the top of the chimney. I hoped this would stop them scuttling down and wedging sticks and mud inside, because usually we are not only prevented from lighting fires from March to September, we are also bothered by teenage jackdaws tumbling down the chimney and leaping sootily about inside the house. And that's not to mention the trouble these birds cause in the farmyard itself, where they eat cow-cake, poultry food, eggs, chicks and ducklings, along with more specialised items like pea seedlings and putty from newly installed double glazing.

This year, as April approached, I did wonder vaguely what course the jackdaws would take when they saw the mesh: would they go for the trees, or plump for the spare chimney? They did neither. They held worried conferences on the roof, beaks full of knobbly sticks; they stamped angrily about and gave shrill cries of rage; and then they launched a two-pronged attack. One group stuffed the mesh with sticks and blobs of mud, while the others squeezed under the eaves and invaded the attic.

In his book *Farmer's Glory*, the celebrated countryman Arthur Street maintained that the best thing to put in a catapult and lob at a bird was a small potato, but I disagree. A Cadbury's Mini-Egg makes a far more aerodynamically efficient missile, and at this time of year there tend to be an awful lot of them lying about the house. Mind you, it's impossible actually to hit a jackdaw with a catapult — they are too skilful at side-stepping — but at least a hail of Easter eggs irritates them and slows down their nest-building.

Unfortunately, my husband was not interested in relieving his feelings with a catapult. He became so maddened by the sound of jackdaws ferrying large quantities of flammable material into the attic that he decided to go up there and confront them in person. This was a mistake, because he did not take account of the fact that they can walk upside down on their elbows and have extremely sharp beaks. As a result, he fell through the ceiling.

So now the house is full of real workmen as well. There is a Scots plasterer tackling the ceiling and a BT engineer mending the answering machine, which unaccountably went wrong when the jackdaws launched their counter-attack. The way the engineer has chosen to test it is to go out to the yard and constantly ring us on his mobile.

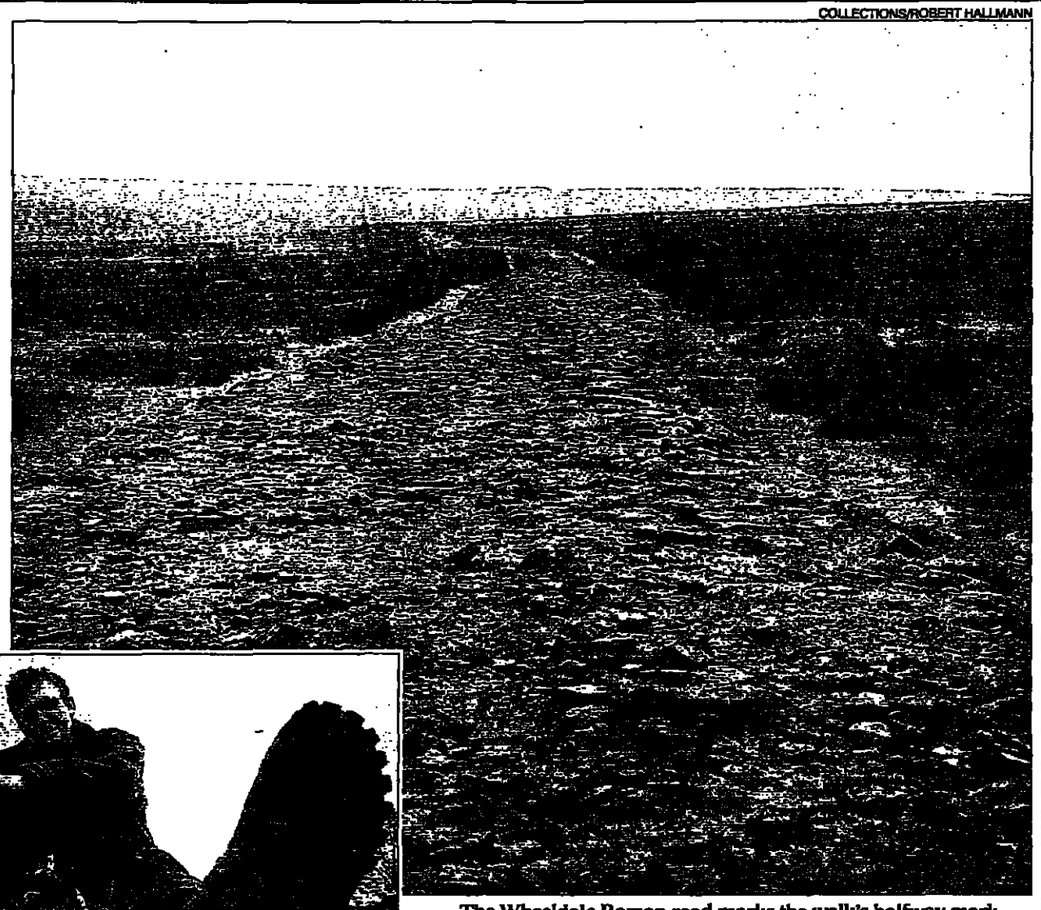
"I'm out here, watching them big black birds eat the cat food," his Devon voice booms into the machine. Meanwhile, the plasterer, no doubt tormented by the burgeoning signs of spring, tells long, unamusing stories about plastic blow-up dolls and complains that, unlike the warm reception accorded to milkmen, women never seem to make passes at men with trowels and sacks of cement.

"One of them birds has got himself a hen's egg, now," the BT engineer remarks interestedly, his voice echoing round the house, and I can tell from my husband's expression that the jackdaw war is about to enter a new and more vicious phase. He is going to call in the men with combat jackets and guns. I find it most dismal, the way that if you farm you always end up in the same predicament: brutally attacking a strong and efficient species in order to encourage something weak and sickly to take its place. On balance, I'd sooner throw in the trowel and breed jackdaws instead.

Bogged down on the road to hell

A 42-mile walk across inhospitable Yorkshire moorland was almost too much for **Richard Morrison**

COLLECTIONS/ROBERT HALLMANN



The Wheeldale Roman road marks the walk's halfway mark



Richard Morrison rests his weary feet after 42 miles of slogging

In the pub, weeks earlier, it had seemed like a great idea. "I'm going to do the Lyke Wake Walk on the Saturday after Easter," a friend had said. "The lightweight what?" I had asked. "It's not a lightweight anything," he had replied, a little tetchily. "It's a 42-mile trek across the North York Moors to the sea. It goes over hills and bogs and ravines, and the challenge is to walk it within 24 hours. If you do that, you qualify for a tie from the Lyke Wake Club, and you wear it with pride."

"Sounds fun," I had said. Fatal words. So it was that, at 4.30am last Saturday, in thick fog, 15 of us gathered by the reservoir at Osmotherley, the official start of the Lyke Wake Walk. Our mood was chirpy, or as chirpy as one can be on two hours' sleep. We felt challenged but confident. After all, it was only a walk over a few hills, wasn't it? And at the end of it, we got a tie!

More than 15 hours later, just six of us staggered, limped or crawled to the finishing post: the huge radio mast at Ravenscar, high on the cliffs overlooking Robin Hood's Bay. To say that we were knackered does an injustice to the humane and quick art of knackering. This was more like something devised by the Inquisition. Our feet were blistered to the bone. Our boots and trousers were plastered in congealed peat, accumulated as we waded through mile upon weary mile of thick, deep, cloying Yorkshire bog. Our tendons had long since twanged and snapped. Every joint silently screamed its protest at the long haul through plunging ravines, or across ankle-twisting quasi-lunar wilderness, or up impossible gradients towards ancient stone monuments that seemed to grin sadistically as we dragged our tortured bodies onwards.

Yet the pain as we climbed that final hill was overshadowed by a still sharper emotion: exultation. The Lyke Wake may not be the meanest, toughest, beastliest walk in England — but if there is a meaner, tougher or beastlier one, you have my permission to shoot me before I attempt it. Just to think about walking those 42 gruelling miles in a single day is perverse: actually to do it is masochism of a very high order.

There is certainly no conventional outdoor pleasure in it, for you are in far too much discomfort to enjoy the spectacular high-moor scenery, or the gorgeous greens and yellows of the heathers, or the fabulous variety of bird life. But to conquer this beast does, finally, bring a fierce joy. You have tramped across some of the most inhospitable, roughest terrain left in England, and lived to tell the tale. Set in the context of that great exhilaration, the small matter of not being able to rise from your bed the next day, or needing to apply stinging ointments to your feet for the best part of a month afterwards, are mere incidental irritations.

More than 150,000 people have enjoyed that exhilaration in the 40-odd years since a Yorkshire farmer called Bill Cowley first devised the Lyke Wake Walk. He planned a route across a traditionally feared part of England, a region into which part of the Roman Ninth Legion disappeared without trace, and where William the Conqueror was himself conquered by Mother Nature, stumbling around lost for a whole night.

But the area has even more ancient associations. The Lyke Wake Walk plots a course between a number of Bronze-Age burial mounds. Perhaps it was this series of slightly morbid landmarks, thousands of years old, that prompted Cowley to name his 42-mile walk after the *Lyke Wake Dirge*: a piece of chilling doggerel, sung since medieval times at Yorkshire funerals, that equates the soul's journey through purgatory to the agonies of a walk across moorland.

Such a spurious and contrived "context" for a 20th-century walk could have been ridiculed into oblivion. But because this walk is so clearly a descent into a mental and physical hell, followed by a glimpse of paradise (ie, you stop walking), the name Lyke Wake Walk stuck. Cowley died some years ago, but the strict rules of the walk live on.

So do the scarcely believable feats of endurance on that savage track. An 81-year-old man has completed the walk; so has a six-year-old boy. The walk has been skied several times in deepest winter, and also traversed by folk in wheelchairs. Five disabled walkers took 20 hours to complete the walk, then spent an hour cutting themselves free of their artificial limbs, which had seized up.

Several demented people each year now finish the walk and then turn round and do the whole thing backwards. Most astonishing of all, two Cambridge athletes ran the entire 42 miles in a shade under five hours.

Measured against these fanatical madnesses, our achievement last Saturday was mundane. Yet for a desk-bound office worker, for whom the biggest physical challenge of the average day is changing Tube trains at Camden Town, the Lyke Wake pushes endurance to the limit. The final ten miles or so seemed endless. First came a slog round the weird architecture of the RAF Fylingdales early warning system, then a knee-bursting scramble across the rocky sides of Jugger Howe Beck, and finally a heartbreaking climb to the Ravenscar radio mast, which seemed to retreat as we approached it — a trick of the mind that will haunt my dreams for years.

If you are attempting the walk — and hey, don't let me put you off — preparation is the first essential. We had hardly covered five miles before I realised that my own training (a few strolls round the leafy lanes of Hertfordshire) was about as useful as pyjamas in a blizzard.

Second, wear good boots. Third, know how to use a map and compass. The only thing worse than being exhausted on one of the most inaccessible moors in England is to be exhausted and lost.

And fourth? Don't make any walking plans for the following week. The spirit may be willing, but the knees will be weak. Did I enjoy it? Not in any conventional sense of the word. But I am looking forward to getting the tie.

The nightingale sings for spring

FEATHER REPORT

PETER BROWN



Rarely seen: a nightingale

THE FIRST nightingales are back, and the British Trust for Ornithology has designated the week May 1-7 as National Nightingale Week. It is hoping to raise money for research into the habitats most liked by nightingales, so that farmers and landowners can be advised what changes they might make on their land to attract these marvellous singers.

It is certainly a thrilling experience to hear a nightingale, and now quite an uncommon one. There are probably no more than 5,000 or 6,000 pairs of nightingales nesting in Britain each year, most of them in East Anglia and southeast England.

Odd pairs may turn up anywhere in the area in dark, damp thickets. Visitors to Minsmere in Suffolk, who stray away from the bird reserve on the coast to nearby commons, may hear them singing in the gorse.

There are two particularly striking phrases that emerge from the rich babble of the nightingale's song. One is a kind of passionate throbbing, which has traditionally been represented in poetry as "jug, jug, jug" — though the poet T.S. Eliot said that it only sounds like that "to dirty ears". The other, less frequent and even more haunting, is a long series of exquisite, dreamy, plaintive notes that rises to a crescendo of intensity.

As part of its appeal, the BTO has produced a full-length CD on which nightingales can be heard singing — 60 minutes of them. It includes the first-ever recording, made in Germany in 1910, of Beatrice Harrison playing the cello to the accompaniment of a nightingale's song in a Surrey garden on May 3, 1927. There is another nightingale singing in that same garden on May 19, 1942, with Lancaster bombers heard passing overhead on their way to Germany (£10 from Nightingales, Freepost 1155, Canterbury, Kent CT3 4BR).

To hear living nightingales in abundance, you need to go further south, or even better, southeast, in Europe. There are about a million pairs breeding both in France and Spain, and half a million pairs in Italy. In the Balkans, the concentration is even greater, and the fourth in the list of nightingale numbers is the small country of Croatia, which has a quarter of a million pairs within its borders. On the Continent, they are particularly common along riverside edges.

In fact, Great Britain has always been at the northern edge of the nightingale's range, and it has never been heard much outside southern England. Its northern limit seems to be roughly the line along which the average June temperature is 19C.

You can quite often hear a nightingale without seeing it, since it usually sings deep in the brambles and other bushes in which it nests, and slips quietly away when disturbed. But sometimes it comes out — even on to the tops of those Minsmere gorse clumps. Then you can see what a handsome little bird it is, with its rufous plumage and its broad tail.

Sometimes you can also get a good glimpse of one flitting across the road in front of a car, for it has always shown a liking for small roadside spinneys. Anyway, the first days of May are the best time to go out and listen for them. By June, their song will be almost over for another year.

DERWENT MAY

● **What's about:** *Birders — look out for parties of swifts, particularly around open water. Twitchers — Little Bunting at St Margarets, Kent. Purple Heron at Holme, Norfolk. White Stork at Zennor, Cornwall. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 50p a minute.*

Take a look before you leap, Mr Toad

Kevin Pilley learns about the green skin code for toads who need to cross the road

PETER TREVNOR



Howard Whiting and Julie Wycherley on toad patrol

The penalty for removing a roadside "Toads crossing" sign is a heavy fine. Why? Because culprits could be the unwitting accessories to the massacre of hundreds of jaywalking *anurans* and *Bufo bufo* which have not been taught to look right, left and right again before crossing the road.

"Sadly, the signs are popular souvenirs and collectors' items," says Howard Whiting, a retired industrial chemist from Redhill, Surrey, who has been an official toad-crossing warden for five years. "But they have a purpose and that's to save the lives of as many common toads as possible. Thousands are killed by motorists every year. We helped 190 to cross the road this year."

With the spawning season over prematurely this year because of the mild weather, Mr Whiting has locked up and folded away his two 8ft steel toad hazard signs which are used in Wonham Mill near Betchworth and on Woodhatch Road between the A217 and A23. They are vandal and scrap-metal merchant proof and will not be seen again until next January.

But Mr Whiting wants more people to join him in a national "toad on the road" campaign next year. "It's a once-a-year effort," he says. "All you need is warm, waterproof clothing, a good torch and a clean bucket. We must stop the carnage. I was driving home from a badminton match one night and I saw all these bodies on the road. It was a massacre. I thought that something must be done. So I signed up as a toad lollipop man."

Each year, from March to April, beginning in Cornwall and moving north, common toads follow their traditional migratory routes from their hibernation sites to their spawning grounds. Many of these routes now cross roads and to reduce the number of fatalities, 549 toad crossings have been designated across Britain. Approximately 15 new crossings are registered every year with county councils, the Department of Transport and the Herpetofauna Conservation Council in Suffolk, which keeps records of the death toll of toads. A nationwide network of toad welfare workers reports "squashes" and "splats".

Most crossings are located in southeast England. The Midlands, Lancashire, Merseyside, Cleveland, south Glamorgan, the Borders, Dumfries & Galloway, Grampian, Central and Lothian are some of the areas which do not yet have registered toad crossings.

Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands have similar schemes. The first toad crossing sign to be installed in Britain was at Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.

Toads tend to move between dusk and midnight during or after rainy weather when the temperature is above 4-5C. As well as ferrying toads from one side of the road to the other in buckets, toad patrols also erect 18-inch fencing, sometimes as much as 200 yards long, which channels the toads into pitfall traps where they can be collected en masse and transported in safety to their breeding grounds. Drains and drainaways present further problems. If there are no human chaperones available, the country's amateur toad welfare groups provide the animals with chicken wire ladders, toad tunnels and amphibian-friendly "eco-ducts" or vegetated bridges to prevent them becoming yet another tragic reptilian "road kill" statistic.

"Toads are not very bright. They don't hop. They crawl and they can take ten minutes to cross a road. So they are very vulnerable. A lot get squashed," says Julia Wycherley, co-ordinator of the Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group which mans 33 toad crossings in the county. In conjunction, Railtrack volunteers recently restocked wetlands along the railway line in Selhurst with toad and frog spawn.

Ms Wycherley, a retired schoolteacher and chartered biologist from Merstham, says: "Toad patrol groups are marvellous and very special people. They are real doers. They come from all walks of life. We have a mother and daughter who go out together to help the toads.

"The mass migration is a primeval ritual and an awesome sight. I saw my first-ever at Hever's Pond. It was a mild, moist mid-March evening and just dropping dusk. There was this rustling and then a chuntering and soon the road was filled with toads. You couldn't see the Tarmac. I want my grandchildren to see the animals I saw as a child."

● *For further information contact Herpetofauna Conservation International (Froglife), Triton House, Bramfield, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9AE (01986 784518).*

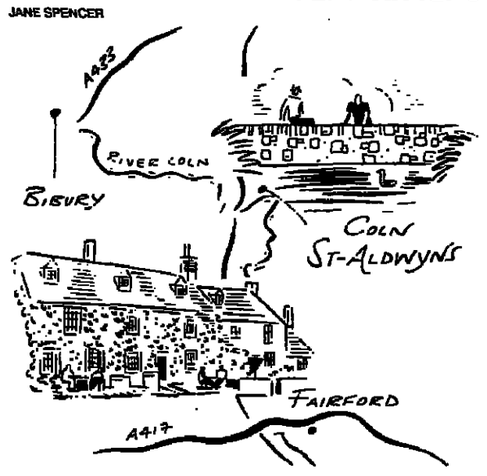
ON THE SPOT: THE COTSWOLDS

Rural recommendations

The place: the bridge by Yew Tree Cottage, Coln St-Aldwyns, Gloucestershire.
The view: the River Coln meanders through the green fields of this pretty Cotswold valley. Conifers stand on a plateau to the west and the village church is to the north.
Aficionados: locals and ramblers.
Historic interest: the village was first established as a settlement linking the Roman towns of Cirencester and St Albans. Two water mills dating from the Domesday Book of 1086 survive and one was still grinding corn until the 1920s.
OS ref: 144/046 on sheet 163.
How to get there: between A417 and A433 from Bibury.
Also nearby: the New Inn at Coln is more than 400 years old and its award-winning restaurant is well worth a visit for lunch or an evening meal. The adjoining hayloft has been skilfully converted into guest rooms.

DEBORAH KING

JANE SPENCER



هكذا من الأصل

re efficient'

. The way the engineer has it is to go out to the yard ring us on his mobile. e, watching them big black eat food," his Devon voice e machine. Meanwhile the doubt tormented by the igns of spring, tells long- ories about plastic blow-up mplains that, unlike the on accorded to milkmen, seem to make passes at vels and sacks of cement em birds has got himself a now," the BT engineer restedly, his voice echoing use, and I can tell from my pression that the jackdaw to enter a new and more . He is going to call in the hat jackets and guns. I find al, the way that if you farm nd up in the same predica- ly attacking a strong and ies in order to encourage eak and sickly to take its dance. I'd sooner throw in d breed jackdaws instead

ntingale r spring

REPORT



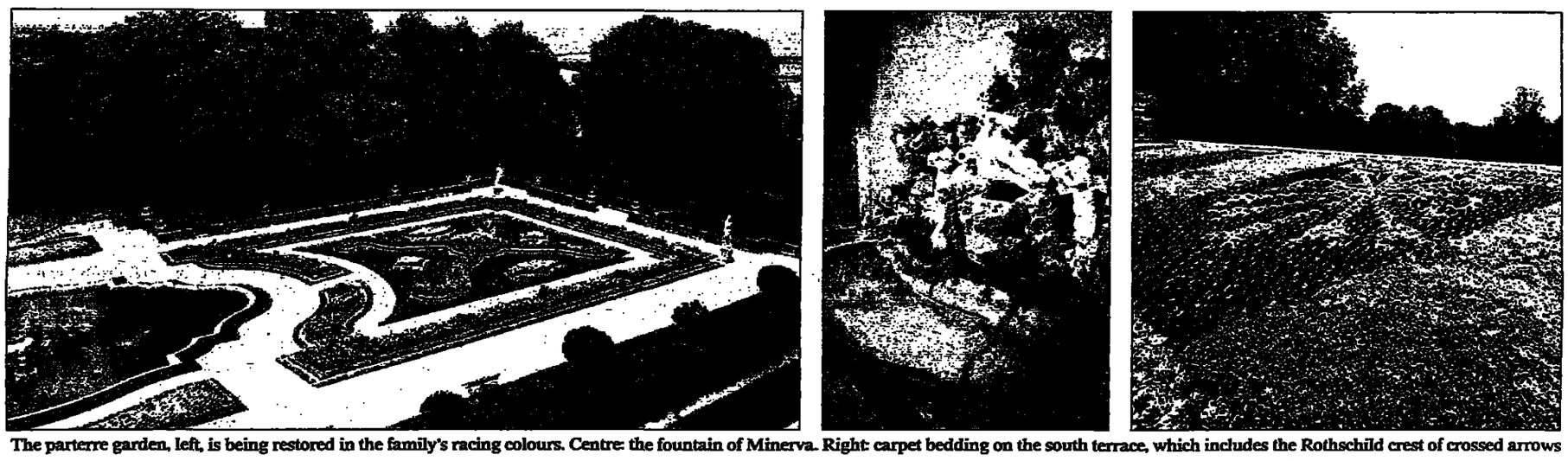
Lord looks to get his hands dirty

Jane Owen meets a man who now has more time for leisure

PETER TREVNOR



Lord Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor, where the gardens were created by his ancestor Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild. "They were run down and it was a challenge to make them beautiful again"



The parterre garden, left, is being restored in the family's racing colours. Centre: the fountain of Minerva. Right: carpet bedding on the south terrace, which includes the Rothschild crest of crossed arrows

Lord Rothschild has no childhood memories of gardens. None. This is surprising given that his family is responsible for a string of important gardens including Exbury, of rhododendron fame.

"I was not interested in gardens until ten years ago when I was trying to make Waddesdon in every aspect what it should be. The gardens were run down and it was a challenge to make them beautiful again," says Lord Rothschild about the 19th-century garden near Aylesbury created by his ancestor Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild.

"I tend to be very absorbed in what I am doing. I spent eight years at the National Gallery and, until the day before yesterday, I was chairman of the National Heritage Memorial Fund and so that is what took up my time. But I am becoming increasingly involved in the garden.

"I have eclectic taste and enjoy everything here from the parterre to Aunt Miriam's wild garden."

Considering he had no interest in gardening before Waddesdon, he has been remarkably active in the field. He owns Britain's most glamorous garden centre, Clifton Nursery in London, and gave lottery money to urban parks on the grounds that they were poorly funded on one hand and degenerated on the other.

With Lord Sainsbury he is restoring Butrint, a landscape on the coast of Albania which goes back to the 5th century BC and is now a sort of Grand Tour in microcosm. And, as part of his responsibility for Somerset House in London, he is transforming a one-acre quadrangle from a car park to a garden. All these projects on top of managing his fortune.

Here is a high achiever with the common complaint of his ilk — he sleeps little, maybe *five hours a night*. Again, typically, he is convinced that he is about to slow down and take things easy.

"For the past four years I have worked like a maniac at the Heritage Lottery Fund (part of the Memorial Fund). But now I have finished that I will get better. For the first time in years I will have some leisure. I hope to weed and prune and do things like the ordinary person, but I haven't yet," he says.

His comments are greeted with scepticism by his daughter, Beth Tomassini, who is sitting with him at The Dairy at Waddesdon. Mrs Tomassini is restoring the parterre garden at the front of the house in dazzling gold and blue, the family's racing colours, and is overseeing the revamping of the rest of the garden.

The work is lavish and awesome in its execution. When 19th-century pictures of Versailles tubs at the front of the house were examined, their makers were traced to Switzerland. You or I might have asked the local blacksmith to knock up some copies but Waddesdon's head gardener, Michael Walker, was sent to Switzerland to order exact copies.

The scale of the restoration is remarkable — in September, 85,000 bulbs of the late-winter to spring-flowering Crocus *tommasinianus var.* and the autumn-flowering purple C. *speciosus* were planted by being scattered off the back of a truck that then added a layer of soil to cover the bulbs under the Ash Tree Walk. Ten thousand lily-of-the-valley bulbs were planted with the Camassia and wild garlic in the woodland garden and 5,000 box trees were planted in an area beside the house.

ME AND MY GARDEN: LORD ROTHSCHILD

A grotto, with a statue deemed to be obscene by my colleague Stephen Anderton, has been restored in the ornate aviary and water has been restored to the Pulham rock garden near The Dairy. It has a cascade and three ponds, the lowest of which sets off a George Cutts sculpture of extraordinary beauty.

Two curving perpendicular waves of steel about 12ft high revolve in opposite directions, reflecting the curves of the ivy vines curled around nearby trees. The choice and setting was down to Lord Rothschild, who has a good eye.

Most of the £15 million for Waddesdon's restoration has come from the Rothschilds, although the house and park belong to the National Trust.

Curiously, for a family steeped in gardens and gardeners, Beth's yen to be a professional gardener did not thrill the family.

"I'd always been interested and started buying plants with my pocket money. When I started gardening seriously they were quite anti. Fifteen years ago it just wasn't the in thing to do," Mrs Tomassini says. She who won a third-year scholarship at Kew, has been on plant-hunting expeditions in the tropics and is involved in projects worldwide, including a medicinal plant scheme in India.

"I wasn't anti it, I just didn't know very much then," says Lord Rothschild who, discreetly, smoulders with pride at his daughter's achievements.

● *Waddesdon Manor gardens (01296 651226), six miles northwest of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire. Open 10am-5pm until December 20, £3 Wed-Sun.*

Precious or just a weed?

Does the bluebell, the terrier of plants, need legal protection, asks Stephen Anderton

MAUREEN HAILSTONE



Bluebells are now protected by law. After changes to the Wildlife Act, wild bluebells can no longer be dug up for sale to gardeners

No gardener can have failed to prick up his ears at the recent mention of bluebells on the national news. Surprisingly, the news was not that bluebells are to be a notifiable weed but that they are under threat.

The trial continued this week of the two men accused of stealing bluebell bulbs from an ancient wood near Thursford, Norfolk. They were allegedly caught last August carrying two full sacks of bulbs and a fork, walking out of Keeper's Wood. The men are denying handling stolen bluebell bulbs. They are being charged with stealing bulbs and aiding and abetting each other to uproot a wild plant contrary to the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The recent review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act has given the bluebell further protection. Wild bluebells can no longer be dug up for sale to gardeners. Does this sound daft? To a gardener it may.

We know what bluebells are like — how for all that haze of blue across the woodland floor, bluebells in the wrong place in a garden are a difficult weed. Dig them out as carefully and often as you can, and there is always one left, always one with its bulb about a yard down which refuses to be caught. Sprays just run off the glossy foliage. Seedlings germinate while your back is turned.

Yet still English Nature says that the bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, is threatened. It may be native throughout all Britain except Orkney and Shetland, but its time is up. Until recently it was legal for the owner of a wild bluebell wood to permit commercial extraction, providing bulbs for sale to gardeners. But not any more. The only bulbs produced for sale now, either in Britain or for export, must be of the farmed variety.

Bluebells are also threatened in the wild by the growing population of muntjac deer, which love to chew off those sappy leaves to ground level, whereas British mammals give bluebells proper respect.

Knowing the plant's powers of regeneration, what puzzles me is how any commercial operation could ever economically extract all the bluebells from a wood. Surely there would always be a lot left? English Nature agrees, but points out that commercial extraction means a JCB scooping out half the woodland floor. With the bulbs go other plants, insects, fungi, bacteria, the whole ecological community. The loss is not just of bluebells.

Now anyone harvesting bluebells from the wild for sale, with or without the landowner's permission, is liable to a fine of up to £2,500. And not before time. Our theories of conservation, as applied to peasant farmers digging cyclamen in Turkey, are finally to be applied to commercial bulb extractors in Britain.

If gardeners want to buy bluebells they will presumably pay more for them, to cover their cultivation as a crop. But why buy when they are so easy to grow from seed. Any gardener who has bluebells already would surely not begrudge someone else a handful of seed or a few bulbs. No British gardener should ever need to buy bluebells again. If you don't ask, you don't get.

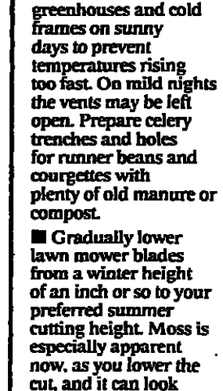
Hole Park, in Kent, has a remarkable bluebell wood, begun simply by throwing seed into woodland clearings. Astonishingly, the rich blue haze stops in a perfectly straight line, where a ditch cuts through the wood and the sowing stopped.

An excellent place to see bluebells in all their glory is High Beeches garden, at Handcross in Sussex. There is no great house to see, because it was burnt down in 1942. But the garden is enchanting. Springs on the hillside above send water bubbling down several gloriously uneven little valleys, broadening out here and there to make wide pools, until they merge lower down. It is a woodland garden with more varieties of rhododendron and magnolia than you could count.

The clay subsoil, high water table and deciduous woodland canopy at High Beeches make it the perfect place for bluebells. In wetter, western Britain, bluebells grow in the open away from trees, but in the east they prefer the shade and extra moisture of woodland.

● *High Beeches Garden (01444 400589) at Handcross, West Sussex, was begun in the 19th century by the Loder family, famous for such heavily scented Loderi rhododendrons such as Loder's White and King George. The garden is open daily from 1-5pm except Wednesday, between April 1 and June 30, and September 1 and October 30. May 4 is Bluebell Day, with a sale of shrubs and rare trees.*

● *Hole Park, Rolvenden, Kent, is open Wednesdays 2-6pm between April 8 and June 24. For further openings, call 01580 241251.*



■ Ventilate greenhouses and cold frames on sunny days to prevent temperatures rising too fast. On mild nights the vents may be left open. Prepare celery trenches and holes for runner beans and courgettes with plenty of old manure or compost.

■ Gradually lower lawn mower blades from a winter height of an inch or so to your preferred summer cutting height. Moss is especially apparent now, as you lower the cut, and it can look very yellow if you mow through it. If you need to file a blade to put an edge on it, always work evenly to keep the blade balanced on either side of the driving spindle; it keeps the mower running more quietly and evenly.

■ Make 3in tip cuttings of soft herbaceous plants like Achillea and perennial salvias. Set them 1in deep in a pot of sandy compost, and cover with polythene to stop them wilting.

■ Be prepared, on nights when frost threatens, to cover with polythene, newspaper or fleece, any plants which are growing very early. Dead-head daffodils to strengthen highly bred show varieties and keep self-sown seedlings out of single-variety displays.

Simply a matter of some hard graft

Barbara Segall meets an expert grafter who makes millions of plants a year

Some people write novels, others make music. Mr Ivan Dickings, propagation manager at Notcutts Nurseries, Woodbridge, Suffolk, makes plants. Even when he came to work at the nursery as a boy, his aptitude for and skill in propagating new plants was remarkable. In 1993 he received one of the first Robert Garner Awards from the International Plant Propagators' Society and in February last year his exceptional skills were honoured when he was made an Associate of Honour by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Most gardeners split and divide a small range of their plants in spring or autumn and take root and stem cuttings throughout the year. Mr Dickings is involved on a somewhat larger scale of production. Through micropropagation, seed, cuttings, divisions and grafting, his department produces two and half million plants annually.

His latest plant multiplication was the production of a new compact euphorbia, 'Redwing'. The new plant was spotted in a Suffolk garden. The owner, Mr Bernard Tickner, took three plants to Mr Dickings. With the help of modern facilities from Notcutt's Micropropagation Laboratory, Mr Dickings built up stocks within three years so that it could be distributed nationally to more than 150 garden centres.

From Christmas through to March he grafts, then he hangs up his grafting hook. This year 50,000 *Hibiscus syriacus* in several varieties were produced. This pink, white or blue-flowered hardy hibiscus is one of the company's speciality plants. Other plants multiplied by grafting include birch, oak, wisteria, beech and camposis. Although the grafting season is over, his advice to "wannabe" grafters is to practise their techniques by whittling away on pruning material through spring and summer.

Then, later when they wish to graft for real, their fingers and thumbs will be safe and provided they choose vigorous, healthy plant material to work with, their technique should be well-honed enough to ensure success in his propagation method.

Grafting is one of the oldest propagation techniques where a piece of one plant is grafted on to the rootstock of another and is not frequently practised in the average garden but Mr Dickings has refined the skill.

Some grafting methods sound more like carpentry or surgery than plantsmanship. In *The Grafter's Handbook* by R.J. Garner, hundreds of grafts are illustrated. There are four that are commonly used: whip or splice, side veneer, whip and wedge.

Notcutts is one of the few commercial horticultural enterprises that propagates by grafting. The technique is passed on to the company's annual intake of modern apprentices. Mark Howard, assistant propagation manager, once an apprentice himself, now instructs them.

Four or five young men and women who begin this three-year apprenticeship each year combine day-release teaching at Otley College, near Ipswich, with practical experience at the nursery. Later in the course they spend time on block release at Hadlow College in Kent, emerging at the end of the three-year course with a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

> His advice to all wannabe grafters is to practise technique

To the apprentices Mr Dickings reveals the many ways successfully to make more of plants, in this case for commerce. But these are skills that everyone can learn and by following his advice, propagate more and more plants.

In spring seed sowing goes into full swing and, as in many a domestic greenhouse, a huge volume of plants is produced from seed. In May propagation by taking cuttings from plants begins. Ribes, roses, forsythia, weigela, philadelphus and many others yield pieces of themselves to increase their numbers by thousands.

Also in spring the arithmetic turns to division, and stock plants are split and divided into new plants. Later in the year, in early winter, root cuttings are taken from plants such as romneyi, poppy and anchusa. Mr Dickings has been working his plant multiplication for some 42 years, and the excitement of seeing the new growth and activity has not diminished. Whether it is a graft of a bread-and-butter plant such as *Hibiscus syriacus*, or a rarity such as oak or birch (both very difficult to graft successfully), he looks for signs of growth daily.

Even though his working days are fully taken up in this seasonal round of making more plants, Mr Dickings continues to enjoy his skills in his own garden. Among the treasures there are peony *suffruticosa* 'Sybil Stern', a glowing magenta colour, and peony *suffruticosa* 'Rock's Variety', a charming, open white bloom with a dark blotch at its centre. Both are rare and difficult to propagate. In Mr Dickings's hands their future survival is assured.

His interest in preserving old varieties that may not be commercially attractive or available has led to active involvement in the Suffolk Group of the National Council for the Preservation of Plants and Gardens (NCPPG). In this capacity at Notcutts, he is the curator of the National Collection of *Hibiscus syriacus*, which in 1997 is being moved to a site close to the retail area of the nursery. Previously, these late-summer flowering plants had bloomed less conspicuously, away from the public gaze. Now they are to have pride of place where their ornamental charms can be better appreciated.

Among the plants he has preserved through the NCPPG is an old apple, 'Lady Henniker', which was raised by the head gardener at the Thornham Estate in Suffolk, at the turn of the century. In 1990 there was only one left, but since Mr Dickings worked his grafting magic on scions of this last specimen, there are numerous survivors in various gardens in the county.

A climbing yellow rose called 'Tostock Gold' is another plant rescued from obscurity. This plant is thought to have been introduced by Barcocks, a Suffolk nursery which no longer exists. Mr Dickings found the plant growing outside the Tostock Post Office, hence its name.

He attributes his success in propagation to the enjoyment he has from plants, an enjoyment engendered by Mr Johnnie Crane, Notcutt's nursery manager and director in the 1950s and 1960s.

He instilled in Mr Dickings a need to get to know and enjoy plants by feeling and smelling them. "Stroke, scratch and sniff" was his advice. According to Mr Dickings, he was "the greatest propagator there was, and I wanted to be like him".

Grafting requires skill in handling a knife, so that you can make a good clean cut on the scion (the material you want to make a new plant with) and the stock. It is a bit like carpentry, as you have to match the cut cambium layers, so that the plant's food and water delivery system is not impaired.

Once the material has been cut and grafted, successful grafting depends on good aftercare. The union is tied using rubber strips and the grafts are dunked in paraffin wax to stop them drying out and laid into plastic crates filled with recycled compost in a warm greenhouse. When they begin to shoot they are hardened off and planted out or potted up.

The side graft or veneer method is used on plants such as *Betula*, *Quercus* and conifers. They are difficult to graft, and care has to be taken that the union is not flooded.

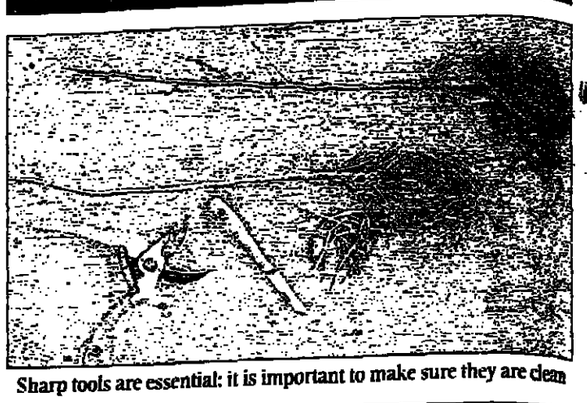
This type of graft, where the stock is left taller than usual, allows for the drawing up of moisture past the point of the union.



DONOHOE

Ivan Dickings attributes his skill at propagating to practice and working only with healthy plants

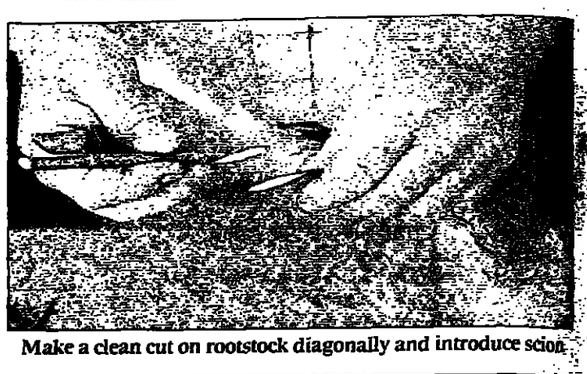
STEP BY STEP SPLICING



Sharp tools are essential: it is important to make sure they are clean



Use secateurs to remove most of the stem of rootstock



Make a clean cut on rootstock diagonally and introduce scion



Bind the scion and the rootstock together and dip in paraffin wax



A plant created by splicing technique

FACT FILE

- Ivan Dickings's garden, Rumah Kita, Church Lane, Bedfield, Woodbridge, is open by appointment and under the National Gardens Scheme on June 7. The garden is also open in support of the Red Cross on September 6.
- Suffolk NCPPG Plant Sale is at Wyken Hall, Stanton near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on May 3.

Ivan Dickings's tips for splicing:

- Always use a clean, sharp knife.
- Use healthy plants.
- Use clean pots and fresh compost.
- Water with tap water.
- Label clearly.

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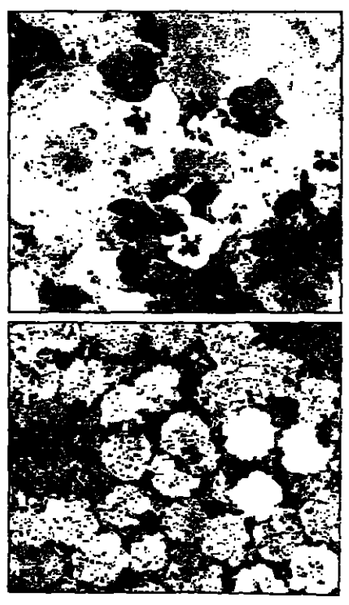
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GARDENS TO VISIT

■ **The Holme, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London NW1**
Opposite the open-air theatre. Nearest Tubes Regents Park or Baker Street. Open today and tomorrow 2.30pm-5.30pm for the National Gardens Scheme. £2.50.
This ulimate *rus in urbe* is plum in the middle of Regents Park, a peaceful, four-acre oasis with a large rock garden, waterfall and stream. The hustle and bustle of Oxford Street is a short walk away but that is difficult to believe. There are sweeping lawns, herbaceous borders, an arbour, a fountain and a formal flower garden.

■ **Claremont Landscape Garden**
Portsmouth Road, Esher (01372 469421). Open to October, daily 10am-6pm. £3.
Now that Claremont is commonly used for dog walking and picnicking, it is easy to overlook its importance in English landscape history. Created by Sir John Vanbrugh, Charles Bridgeman, Capability Brown and William Kent in the 18th century, the most striking feature is the three-acre turf amphitheatre, made by Bridgeman in the 1720s. This remarkable earthwork has similarities to some of this century's most innovative land-art creations and even to the Jencks-Keswick landscape in the Borders. There are magnolias, rhododendrons, camellias and a wild-flower meadow, but it is the landscaping that makes this garden so appealing. Other attractions include a belvedere tower, grotto, lake and Princess Charlotte's gothic tea house.

■ **Whiteknights**
The Ridges, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3SY (0118-973 3274). Tomorrow, 2pm-5.30pm, £2. Cream teas. Open by appointment only at other times.
Tomorrow, through the National Gardens Scheme, this unusual private garden will open to the public. There is a great deal packed into the 2½ acres by Heather and Peter Bradly, the owners, who started the garden 12 years ago. There is a Japanese enclosure, a formal Zen-style garden with raked gravel and tea house; a Mediterranean section; and a Chinese-style courtyard garden that features a coloured pebble dragon and Chinese pavilion tea house made from a plain cedar garden chalet. In addition, the Bradlys have created a remarkable miniature Tudor village, measuring 12ft by 9ft.



Part of the Japanese garden at Whiteknights

■ **Benthall Hall, Broseley, Shropshire**
One mile NW of Broseley. Open for the National Gardens Scheme today 1.30pm-5.30pm and open at other times for the National Trust. £2.
George Maw, the bulb and alpine specialist, lived here in the second half of the 19th century and it is here that *Chionodoxa luciliae*, the glory of the snow, first flowered in Britain. It is a plantsman's garden with roses interspersed with mouse-plant *Arisarum proboscideum* and the unusual form of bear's britches, *Acanthus balcanicus*.

JANE OWEN



STEPHEN ANDERTON'S GARDEN ANSWERS

Q Would you suggest some large shrubs to grow in containers on a south-facing patio? They need to be self-supporting, and pastel colours would be preferable, as would summer flowers. I am also looking for height. — Mrs G. Kozma, Hitchin, Herts.

A In the long-term, all shrubs weary of life in containers, especially in a hot, south-facing position, so you are right to think about small trees to get some immediate height.

Put in a tub a clump of the perennial grass *Miscanthus floridulus* making a tall, shimmering clump of 6-9ft. Also for dramatic foliage effect plant a tree of heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*. Give it lots of liquid feed.

For colour try *Hydrangea paniculata* or the ordinary hortensia types, hebes, *Philadelphus lemoinei* 'Erectus' (perfumed and floriferous), hardy fuchsias and tubs of lilies, especially *Lilium regale*, which is easy to grow and heavily perfumed.

Q I am ashamed to admit that our beautiful south-facing wisteria, interplanted with clematis, has been unpruned for at least 15 years. A considerable amount of dead growth has built up, and some of the long, gangly branches need cutting back. When and where do I begin? — Mr J. F. Milford, Bexhill on Sea, E.Sussex.

A Cutting back a woody climber that is in a mess is never quick or easy. Do not expect it to look good again until it has had a chance to regrow a little after cutting. I would wait until the end of the season, when the sap is down, to do any major pruning with a saw. Any small-scale tidying with secateurs can be done now. So long as the old trunks are close enough to the wall, and they have young wood coming from them, I would keep them as high as possible. They are part of an old wisteria's charm. Be drastic in thinning out and shortening the bird's nest of young growth.

Q Two years ago I planted some snowdrop bulbs in my lawn and all I have had is leaves and no flowers. What am I doing wrong? — Mrs H. S. Sivyer, Newton Valence, Hants.

A Did you plant them from dry bulbs? Snowdrops do not like this. They shrivel and take time to recover, if they recover at all. So long as they are still there and making leaf, they will perform. Meanwhile, why not beg a few bulbs from someone's garden? Plant immediately, and if your lawn is hot and dry, put them somewhere shadier and more moist.

● Stephen Anderton's *Garden Answers*, published by Robson Books, is available from bookshops at £11.99.

● *Write to Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. We regret that any enclosures cannot be returned.*

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MARYLEBONE, NW1. Spacious 2 bed FF flat by Marylebone Station. Recep F/H £149,950 Sandfords 0171 723 9988

W6 King spacious 1 bed chamber conversion 21st. quiet location. £135,000. 0181 8677199

W1 Rare period mews hse 2/3 bed, freehold, private road by Baker St & West End. £325,000 Sandfords 0171 723 9988

LITTLE VENICE

Luxury newly refurbished raised ground floor apartment in White Stucco period property overlooking canal with own front garden. Large reception room, interconnected Smooth Granite kitchen, marble bathroom, double bedroom. Wooden floors, high ceilings, alarm system. Freehold. Offers over £199,000. Private Sale.
0181 3410424

FREEHOLD HOUSE MARYLEBONE NW1

In superb condition at end of terrace mews house with a small garden. Three bedrooms, bathroom, large reception room, kitchen. New to the market £525,000.
KINLEIGH FOLKARD & HAYWARD
0171 486 5551

F/H HOUSE, MAIDA VALE, W9

Newly refurbished, Bright modern end of terrace corner house. 5 mins Tube and 1 min Park, 3 beds. 1 bath, & separate cloak. Double recep. Porch to Kitchen. Wood floors. Off st parking. Patio on 2 sides and also beautiful secluded 45ft main garden.
£399,950.
Tel: 0171 289 7281 (Office)
0171 286 6488 (Home).

EALING, W13

Opportunity to acquire a superb brand new Coach House with 10 year NHBC Warranty. 3 bedrooms 1 with en-suite shower room, bathroom. Lounge, dining room. study, all with Oak strip flooring, fully fitted 'Shaker' style kitchen with Neff stainless steel appliances, downstairs cloaks cupboard, gas central heating, double glazed, gated parking.
Freehold £295,000
To view telephone:
0171 794 1110 Mon-Fri
0973 668609 Weekend

HAMMERSMITH Riverside Property 2 bd, 2 bth, 1 recep, modern kit 3rd flr, p/bfit. Spectacular views over Thames. Lift, p/kg, security £250,000 Contact C Howard King & Farmers 0181 8787966

HAMMERSMITH, W6 Spacious 2 bed Victorian terr house offering extensive living space. Conservatory. Garden. Freehold. £370,000. Century 21 Kensington 0171 371 2100.

KENSINGTON NORTH 2/3 bed maisonette & priv garden £165,000. 0171 221 9044

RIVERNESS TERRACE, W2 3 bed, 2 bath long lease. £235,000. 0171 792 2053 Temple Crest

HYDE PARK Flat wanted for overseas cash buyer upto £360,000 Esse Homes 0171 724 9919

HEREFORD ROAD W2: Best side, 2 bedroom garden flat, conversion, large reception, patio garden. £220,000 share of freehold. Westbourne Estates 0171 727 8612.

LANCASTER GATE W2: Immaculate one bedroom apartment on 7th floor of modern block. Large roof terrace. £159,950. Westbourne Estates 0171 727 8612.

MAIDA VALE Warwick Av W9, 2 bed immaculate split level first floor flat. Overlooking gardens. £200,000. 0171 266 0849.

MARYLEBONE NW1 Good value 3 bedroom flat with patio garden, bathroom, reception room, large kitchen. £189,950. Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward. 0171 486 5551

W1, Chiltern St. 2 bed flat, dbl recep, FB perfect pied a terre, long lease, urgent sale £224,950. Sandfords 0171 723 9988

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ST JOHN'S SQUARE
CLERKENWELL EC1

18 Crafted Apartments in Clerkenwells Premier Location

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GRAY'S INN ROAD LONDON WC1

Eight newly refurbished 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments, ideally placed for the West End and City. Some apartments benefit from a balcony, one has a conservatory and the penthouse has a private roof terrace.

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Winkworth
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Located in
BLOOMSBURY AND CLERKENWELL

Prices between £310,000 and £450,000

Sole Selling Agents
0171 250 1012

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

TRADESCANT RD SW8 A large 4 bedroom refurb'd house close to Vauxhall Bridge. Daniel Cobb Ree 0171 735 9810

BELGRAVIA

CADOGAN LANE, SW1. Superbly presented house, 4 beds, 2 bath (1 ensuite), elegant drawing rm, dining rm, int garage, off st pkg, cllr. rm, luxe kit leading to glorious conserv o'looking walled gdn. Private sale. OIRO £795,000. 01276 66986

BLACKHEATH

BLACKHEATH/GREENWICH Spacious 4 bed Victorian semi-detached family house. A few mins walk fr Station. Park. 2 recepns, 2 baths and v. lge open plan kit/living space. 60 ft gdn. £265,000. 0181 858 5209.

CITY & WEST END

BARBICAN, EC2. 5th floor studio flat. £85,000. Large type studio £97,000. 2 bed/2 bath pads. £197,500. Imme mod. 2 bed mais £237,000. Daniel Watney 0171 283 4414

BLOOMSBURY Spacious 3 bedroom flat. (1 s/c). 4th floor, lift, small block. Remodelled to high standard. Possible parking. £299,500. 0171 813 1215.

CITY, SC1. 2 mins Barbican. Mod 2 bed/2 bath £308,000. Daniel Watney 0171 283 4414

CITY, Portsoken Street. Studio apartment with parking. Gas heating. £86,995 Leasehold. 0171 480 6815.

THAMESSIDE Warehouse Apartments. Spectacular one and two bedroom, two bathroom apartments with views of the Thames in a stunning warehouse conversion in the heart of the city, and opposite the famous Globe Theatre. Some have balconies and covered private parking. £85 pw all floors plus concierge service. Prices from £185,000 Tel Globe View on 0171 489 8013.

FITZROVIA W1: Stunning newly refurbished 4 bedroom 2 bathroom mews house. Studio style reception room. Double garage. £510,000. Freehold. Westbourne Estates 0171 727 8612.

CITY DOCKLANDS & EAST

LEATHERMARKET Court. London Bridge. 2 bedroom purpose built apartment, 2 double beds, 2 baths, access to private residential development. £158,995 Leasehold. 0171 480 6815.

ROTHERHITHE 3 bedroom Freehold houses, private garden, off street parking. Good condition throughout. Vacant possession. £119,995. 0171 480 6815.

ST KATHERINES DOCK 2 bedroom apartment with balcony. Kitchen/diner. £143,000 Leasehold. 0171 480 6815.

FULHAM

PETERBOROUGH ESTATE
SW6 Adold Rd
1st time advertised charming Victorian family house, 6 bed, 3 baths (2 ensuite) 26' dble recep, 16' playrm, utility rm, cllrm, 20' kitchen/breakfast rm overlooking privcy 27' southwest facing garden, cellar. F/H.D.
No chain. £695,000.
Tel: 0171 736 4190.

CITY DOCKLANDS & EAST

WAPPING 3 bedroom house with garage and garden. £179,995. Freehold. 0171 480 6815.

TOWER HILL Double bedroom maisonette with garden. Garage, kitchen/diner. £167,500. 0171 480 6815.

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

BATTERSEA SW11 Mysore Road. 4 bed, 2 bath, double reception, kitchen/diner, patio garden. £289,950. Tel: 0831 838 300

BARNES 3 dbl bed house, thro. recep, kit/ diner, secluded patio garden. Village location near to Pond, River, & Rail. £295,000 ono 0181 878 8906

CLAPHAM COMMON, SW11 - Tregarron Rd. Immaculately decorated Victorian house, period features, 22ft recep, 3 beds, ensuite bath, shwr, cellar West facing gdn. £305,000. Gge. avail. by separate neg. Bishop Rennick 0171 228 0023

OFFLEY RD SW9 2 large refurb'd mais £195,000 Daniel Cobb Residential 0171 735 9810

KENNINGTON ROAD SE11 An immaculate Georgian house, excellent bedrm & entertaining space. £625pw Daniel Cobb Residential 0171 735 9810

MAIDAVALE FH, gnd fl flat, 1 db l single bd, gdn & terrace. £200,000 0171 286 4951.

PUTNEY, SW15. Det fam hse in lge plot. 4/5 beds, 2/3 recep, 2 bath, jac kit/brk, cllr, garage. Lge front and rear gdns. Price £850,000 F/H Sole Agts. Warren 0181 780 1100

PUTNEY, SW15. Impressive det hse with scope for extension, 5 beds, 2 bath, jac kit/brk, 2 cllr, garage. Wide 90' gdn. Price £725,000 OIRO Sole Agts. Warren 0181 780 1100

PUTNEY Attractive mews, central location, 3 beds, garage. £270,000. 0181 7802397

PUTNEY, SW15. Selection of 3 & 4 bed mansion flats for sale. All with 2 recep, communal garden, ping. Prices from £240,000. Warren 0181 780 1100

SE1 Penarth mod 2 bed apart incl parking. £197,500. Daniel Watney 0171 283 4414

SE16 Lge studio flat in arct design warehse conv on the river. Sep Kit, Bath. Rate o'look Bermondsey Square. Secure ping. Video entry phone. Porter. £95,000. 0370 918970.

SW11, Modern 3 bed terraced town house in prestigious Morgans walk. Ensuite mast bedroom. In private residential. £250,000 ono. 0171 9241670.

VASSALL RD SW9 2 stunning refurb flats from £159% Daniel Cobb Ree 0171 7359510

WANDSWORTH Nr Putney borders a well pres. sought after 1Yr. old family hse, 2 rec, kit/breakf. 3 beds, bath, West-early facing garden. £299,950. View today 0181 870 7514. Allen Bstepel 0181 780 0077.

KENNINGTON
Beautifully restored 5 storey Georgian family residence on Kennington Rd. 4 bedrms, 2 bathrms, 4 receptions, wooden floors, Age, 5 fireplaces, walled garden. F.H.L.D.
No chain. £425,000
Tel: 01929 481379
or 0370 273562.

SW11
Beautiful Shaftesbury cottage
In sought after quiet road
Redecorated throughout
3 bed + loft, 24ft lounge
Stylish country cottage used both 20ft kitchen/ blue room
Polished floors.
Many original features incl:
3 Victorian fireplaces
40ft South facing mature garden.
Clapham Junction 5 mins.
OIRO £238,000.
Tel: 0171 585 3854

FULHAM

COLEHILL LANE Luxury interior designed maisonette in a typical period property. Boasting 2 large double bedrms, new kit & bath. £185,000. 0171 7310508

HAMPSTEAD

2 BED light & pretty flat, v near Heath, 2 recep, small gdn & patio. L/H, no service charge. £215,000. 0181 458 7044

HIGHGATE

Winkworth

BYRON COTTAGE
An exquisite five bedroom Georgian grade 2 listed house in the heart of the village. Three receptions, garage, three bathrooms, superb condition.
£795,000 F/H

CHURCH CONVERSION
Extraordinary, unique multi level apartment with a roof terraces and even a belfry tower. Stylishly presented there are no comparisons.
£339,950. L/H
0181 341 1988.

HIGHBURY/ ISLINGTON

N1 3/4 bed house, Very quiet street, 2 receptions, 2 baths. £425,000. 0171 359 2660.

N4 MANOR HOUSE
New 3 bed terraced town house
3 storeys, large fitted kitchen
large lounge, 1 bathroom.
1 ensuite shower, 1 cloakroom
Own garage and driveway.
30ft garden laid to lawn
Near to city and tube
£178,000
No chain, Freehold
Tel: 0181 802 3288(home)
or 0961 136727

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

BRUNSWICK GARDENS, W8, 3 bed corner upper mais with roof terrace. Share of F/H. £686,000. Tel: 0171 2430734.

HOLLAND PK Smart 2 bds apt, com. garden. Priv garage. F/H £270,000. 0171 221 9044

FIELD ROAD SW10, 2 bed flat with west facing gdn. Ideal pied-a-terre/hol. £220,000. May & Co. 0171 376 3726.

KENSINGTON, W8 Splendid 4 bed Georgian style family house built in 1960's. Lower ground garage. Substantial gdn. Leasehold. £875,000.Century 21 Kensington 0171 371 2100.

POND PLACE SW3, 2 bedroom, 3rd floor flat in listed building. Leasehold £195,000. May & Co. 0171 376 3726.

NO TIME to find your new home. No new homes, no fee. Call Property Eye Ltd 0707 1221 110

WANTED Cash buyer F/H house with driveway, gdn, gge, 7 beds. St Johns Wood, Holland Pk. Up to £5,000,000. 0171 724 9919

SW7 2 bed period mews house near Queen's Gate. Garage. Freehold. For details call Julian Goddard. 0171 283 4414

PORTABELLA Area Smart 2 bed modern mais & gdn. Ex comm. £117,500. 0171 221 9044

CHELSEA HARBOUR SW10 PENTHOUSE
Realistically priced for private sale. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (Jacuzzi). Luxury fitted, sunny split level flat with 2 large Terraces. Lift access to underground parking space. Harbour amenities including Gym & Restaurants.
A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE.
115 Year Lease. £420,000
Call 0171 823 3203.

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

CHELSEA BY RIVER & CHEYNE WALK
Superb Refurbishment
Immaculate spacious 3 Beds, 3 Bath luxury apartment, Double Drawing/Dining, Luxe Kitchen. Patio. £585,000.
HARRIS LATNER
0171 224 5544
View Today

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

KNIGHTSBRIDGE, SW7 Pleasant 3 bed mansion flat on 4th floor of popular building opposite Harrods. L/H £530k. Century 21 Kensington 0171 371 2100.

NOTTING HILL

PEMBRIDGE Villas, 5 min tube, F/H, Garden flat, 3 beds, 2 baths en suite, o/k rm, FF kit, CH, 45 ft gdn. £360,000. No agents. 0171 625 1653

PALACE GT Outstanding 2 bed apt wood floors. Close Ken Gdns £259,950. 0171 221 9044

BRISTOL

COUNTY HOMESEARCH CO Professional service for buyers. Save time, effort, money. Bristol 0117 974 1569.

HARPENDEN Thameslink Kings X/City 30 Mins. Highly individ det house in conservation area, outstanding modern features, split level/galleried, Landscaped grounds. Lane Fox 01582 764343.

BERKSHIRE

BERKSHIRE DOWNLANDS
A fine individually designed spacious dec 5 bedrm, 3 bathrm family house. 1/3acre garden. Countryside of Welsh brid. approx. 3,100 sq ft of living accomm. attractively located in the Heritage heart of Compton, a popular rural village. Easy access M4/ A34/ M40. Good local schools.
OIEO £350,000.
Tel 01635 578858.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

MARLOW, 2 bed semi detached, ext victorian cottage overlooking open fmcmland, priced for quick sale. £239,500. 01628 477435 H, 0468 406025 M.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

LOOK!
Thatched Cottage
Grade 2 Listed
In village close to Cambridge. Close to all major transport routes to London & Midlands. 3 Bedrooms, ¼ Acre Land. Wooden Barn in need of renovation. Vacant Possession.
OIRO £225,000.
For all details
Tel: 01223 871262

CAMBRIDGESHIRE 3 Storey house created from Regency Hall with views over park land. Huntingdon 2 (Kingscross 45mins).Approx 3,200sq.ft. of impressive accomodation, 2 reception rooms, 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, double garage, private & communal gardens. Guide price £295,000. Bidwells Tel:(01223) 841842.

CORNWALL

COUNTY HOMESEARCH CO Prof service for purchasers in Devon & Cornwall 01872 223949

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COUNTY HOMESEARCH CO will find & secure your ideal home Cumbria/Lancs 01524 762999.

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BREATHTAKING VIEWS
From the rear garden of this unique 2 bedrm cottage within a Grade II listed building setting. Perfect for weekend or permanent home. North Lake close to Greystoke Village. M6 & mainline station (London/Glasgow) 4 mls.
FH.L.D. £95,000.
Tel: 01768 483085.

DERBYSHIRE

COUNTY HOMESEARCH CO will find & secure your ideal home. 0114 268 2523.

DEVON

NR SALCOMBE - a holiday cottage in South Devon without the worry of total ownership. 1, 2, & 3 bed cottages. Choose 4 weeks per year for 12 years. Prices from £9,950. Indoor Pool and restaurant on site. Details Stancombe Manor 01548 831922

HERTFORDSHIRE

BERKSHIRE

DREWEATT NEATE

PROPERTY EXHIBITION
at
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Tuesday & Wednesday
28 & 29 April 1998
10.30 am to 6 pm
A wide range of properties for sale and to let in Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire will be displayed at this 2-day exhibition.
For further information
0171 839 0888

Chancellors
ESTATE AGENTS




DETATCHED VILLAGE PROPERTY SET IN 2 ACRES ADJOINING RIVER THAMES WITH MOORING AND INLET/SLIPWAY
GUIDE PRICE £375,000
Preston Crowmarsh, Nr Wallingford, Oxfordshire
Oxford, Henley, Reading, M4, M40 and Mainline Station all within 15 mile radius. Main House with 5/6 bedrooms, attached 1 bedroom annexe. May benefit from some updating.
Further details/appointments to view via Chancellors Estate Agents 01491 837567.

KENT

HOLLINGBOURNE 5 superb new conversion of listed barn of great character, 4 beds, 2 baths, galleried lounge, d.r., study, oak kitchen, utility, w.c. dble gge, approx 2 acres gdn & paddock. approx 2 acres gdn & paddock. £345,000. OWLQUEST LTD 01622 817999 (office) 01622 882102 (eves & wknds)

WHITSTABLE, Kent idyllic sea front cottage. 2 bedrooms. Huge convertible loft. Stunning sea views. Close to rail/Hampton/Shops. Back patio outhouse. £89,950. Call Steve on 0973 656201.

BICKLEY
Superb Edwardian detached house with many original features including fireplaces, 6 bedrms, 3 reception, study, oak kitchen with Aga & integral appl. GCH, det garage, cellar, sunny mature garden. 10 mins BR station.
No chain. £425,000.
Tel: 0181 467 6097.

LINCOLNSHIRE

ASHGROVE, Pillingham £135,000
'Ashgrove' a superior 4 bed detached house with double garage, constructed from natural stone - nestling in a conservation village, just 15 mins drive from the Cathedral City of Lincoln. Further Details call Walter's (01522) 512513

NORFOLK

WORMEGAY, 7 mls Kings Lynn. Close to A10 & BR. Lge well maintained 3/4 Bed Det Hse with Annexe & Dbl Gge. Huge Gdn & Land – Approx 4 acres. Excellent Lifestyle. £175k. Private Sale. Call 01553 840758

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NORTHANTS stone cott, village close M1/A14. Ideal weekend retreat, 2 beds, C/H, secure & cosy. £50,000. 01604 759000

SOMERSET

METHERSTOWEY delightful 3 bed cottage, original features, picturesque village, nr sea, edge Cheddar. London 2½ hours. £75K. Tel: 0171 274 2635

STAFFORDSHIRE

SECLUDED Cottage approx 1 acre for restoration or plan for 5 bed house. 10 miles from Stoke. £125,000. Reply Box No 2113.

COUNTRY PROPERTY

BREWOOD Listed low main townhouse. Conservation area, convenient Wolverhampton & Airports, also rural river valley 2 beds, lge study, 2 recepts, re kitchen, wood floors, CH, lge gge. £135,000. 01483 898690

CORNHAM New 3 bedroom, 2 bath-room houses on private development behind listed entrance gates in desirable location close to Weybridge and M25/A3 junction. Fitted kitchen with oven hob & hood, utility room, downstairs cloakroom, integral garage. Only £199,995. 01932 865900

GUILDFORD Superb new 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, apartment with private terrace, situated just off Guildford High Street. Lift, video entryphone, communal parking. Short walk to shops and station. £139,995. Tel:01483 545197

KINGSTON/ SURBITON

Magnificent late - Victorian detached house, in quiet road
At the bottom of the large garden is an attractive bungalow.
The spacious accomodation includes 27ft drawing room, dining room, kitchen/ breakfast room, original conservatory 6 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and Ensuite shower room
£320,000.
Tel: 0181 546 6344

OXFORDSHIRE

OLD MINSTER LOVELL A charming period country house in about 2 acres of formal gardens & woodland, river frontage. 8 bedrms, master with ensuite bath/shower, 4/5 reception rms, kitchen, laundry + usual ancillary rms, Central heating & garaging. Large swimming pool, tennis court, 2 independent holiday/guest cottages. Secluded location on the edge of the Cotswolds. Easy access A/M40. 4 miles Burford, 3 miles Witney. Chadlington/Faringdon 7½ miles. FOA. Morris & Co & CO (01993) 779020.

SUFFOLK

XV C. Cottage 3 recep, 4 bed, good situation, 2/3 acre, annex potential, nr Bury St Edmunds. £235,000. 01284 767809.

14 MILES COLCHESTER
11 miles Ipswich.
15thC period farmhouse with 2.5 acre paddock/meadow in an open setting
25 miles Colchester station. Open 4 single acre country lane, overlooking many meadows. 5 beds, 4 receptions, 3 baths. 2 ensuite, main garage, outbuildings, for many years former stables. Many original features, much character.
4 acres AGA.
No chain. OIRO £340,000.
Tel: 01449 741493

DEDHAM VALE, Old Rectory
5 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 shower rooms, 3 receptions, study.
Beamed kit/ breakfast room with aga, FCH, double glazing, courtyard, large part walled garden containing 2 bed cottage, double garage, workshop, outbuildings.
Colchester suburbs 6 miles.
NO chain £335,000.
Tel: 01206 322320

SURREY

GUILDFORD Listed low main townhouse. Conservation area, convenient Waverley & Airports, also rural river valley 2 beds, lge study, 2 recepts, re kitchen, wood floors, CH, lge gge. £135,000. 01483 898690

CORNHAM New 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom houses on private development behind listed entrance gates in desirable location close to Weybridge and M25/A3 junction. Fitted kitchen with oven hob & hood, utility room, downstairs cloakroom, integral garage. Only £199,995. 01932 865900

GUILDFORD Superb new 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, apartment with private terrace, situated just off Guildford High Street. Lift, video entryphone, communal parking. Short walk to shops and station. £139,995. Tel:01483 545197

WALES

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NORTH Rural location. 4 bed lge hse. Close to Snowdonia National Park. period, stn fitted kitchen with terracotta tiled floor. CEH, dbl glazed. Cottage style inside as featured in House Beautiful Magazine Oct 1997. £75,000. 01286 870128.

NR BALA 2 Bed, Stone Cottage, Fully Modernised, & Attractively Landscaped Grounds, Lge Outbuilding. Superb Private Location with Views to the Upper Dee Valley. £52,500 01490 440346

PEMBS COAST. St Davids. Beautiful stone barn conv 4 cottages from £89,950. 01348 840716



ARGYLL ROAD, W8.

A bright and elegant Victorian house with spacious family accommodation and a west-facing garden.

5 bedrooms, dressing/sitting room, 3 bathrooms, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, sauna and cellar.

Freehold

Price Guide: £1,950,000

KENSINGTON OFFICE: 0171 727 0705

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OXFORDSHIRE – Langford Price Guide: £355,000
In a delightful village setting, a Grade II listed, stone built house of 17th century origin. 4/6 bedrooms, 2/3 bathrooms, dressing room/bedroom 6, 3/4 reception rooms, kitchen, utility room, cloakroom/bathroom 3, WC, outbuildings and gardens of about 0.3 acres.
OXFORD OFFICE: 01865 311522

HAMPSHIRE
Lymington

A charming Grade II listed house with roof top views over the Lymington River and towards the Isle of Wight.

3/4 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, study, conservatory, garden and 1 bedroom flat producing income from holiday lets until October '98.

Price Guide: £345,000

LYMINGTON OFFICE: 01590 677233





DEVON – East Budleigh Price Guide: £100,000
On the edge of this attractive village, a pretty Listed 16th century terraced cottage with an enchanting mature garden adjoining the Budleigh Brook. 2 bedrooms, bathroom, reception room, kitchen, utility room and boot room.
WINCHESTER OFFICE: 01962 863131



MANSFIELD PLACE, NW3. Freehold £450,000
A double-fronted Victorian cottage in a charming Hampstead backwater. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, garden and patio.
HAMPSTEAD OFFICE: 0171 431 3232



HAMPSHIRE
Lymington

A conveniently located Grade II listed house, in need of modernisation, south of the High Street.

4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 reception rooms, hall, 2 cloakrooms, kitchen, utility room, cellar, off-street parking and south-facing garden.

Price Guide: £340,000

LYMINGTON OFFICE: 01590 677233



SURREY – Kingston Price Guide: £795,000
A detached Edwardian house with a wealth of character, a well screened garden and near the Thames. 8 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, cloakroom, WC, utility room, cellar, off-street parking and garage.
WIMBLEDON OFFICE: 0181 944 7172

URSULA STREET, SW11.

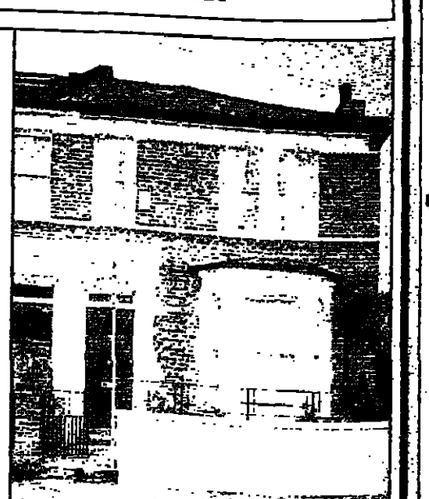
Presented in good decorative order throughout, a pretty semi-detached house with a delightful mature garden, in a sought-after position close to Battersea Park.

3 bedrooms, bathroom, reception room, kitchen, cloakroom and garden.

Freehold

£305,000

BATTERSEA OFFICE: 0171 228 0174



HEAD OFFICE:
26 CURZON STREET, LONDON W1Y 8LD. 0171-493 4106
FAX: 0171-629 6071 http://www.johndwood.co.uk

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LETTINGS AND MANAGEMENT:
To let your house or flat in London & Surrey: 0171-232 0100
South of the M4 01730 829899 • North of the M4 01865 311522

هكذا من الأصل

Lynette Carr lost everything she owned, including her beloved cats, when her home was destroyed by fire

ANDREW HASSON



Lynette Carr outside her fire-ravaged home. She escaped through a window

The day my house burnt to ashes

JAMES CLEVETT



Firemen sorting through the debris of the burnt-out house. Lynette must stay in an hotel for four months while it is refurbished

Sunday afternoon, a cup of tea, a book and a nap. I must have shut my eyes for less than 15 minutes. I woke up to a crackling noise and a white mist in the air. It was as if a greasy grill had been left on for several hours. I jumped up and ran into the kitchen where the cupboard that houses the gas boiler was full of flames.

I ran to call the fire brigade. Fortunately they registered my number and address before I panicked and accidently pulled the extension cable out. I fumbled around, trying to put it back in, but my hands were shaking too much. I grabbed my mobile and dialled 999 while running out of the back door to call a neighbour for help.

I didn't think about how quickly fire spreads when I ran back upstairs to rescue my two adorable cats, Dave and Tails. I ran to the bedroom where they had been sleeping. After struggling to catch them, I tried to scoop one under each arm. But as I turned around they wriggled out of my grasp. By now it was almost pitch black with only a little light coming through the window.

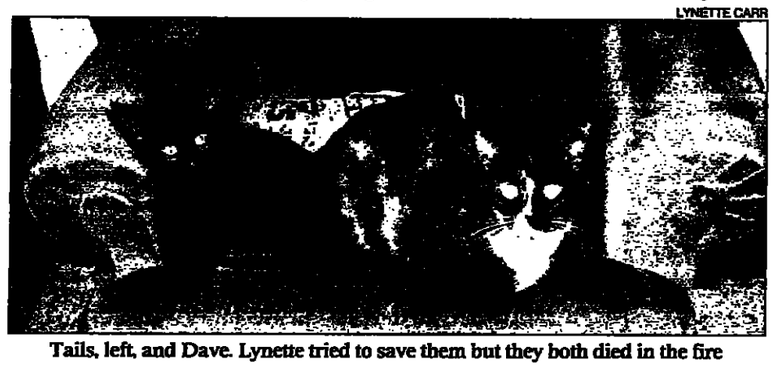
The black smoke was suffocating. I could not breathe properly and felt dizzy. I opened the bedroom window and put my head out. Smoke was billowing out around my head. I shouted for help.

My breathing became erratic and I could feel my heart beating furiously. I was taking short, gasping breaths. I could not see the cats but I could hear them crying, and I felt totally useless. I climbed up and pulled myself out of the window head first. I didn't think about the height of the drop or the concrete below. It was the only way out.

But the laces on my training shoe had become tangled in the window clasp, so I was left hanging outside the window by my right arm and left leg. Finally, my neighbour climbed a ladder, released my foot and carried me down.

I was in such a state about my cats that it wasn't until I got in the ambulance that I realised my wrist was burnt. My hair and face were black. It felt as if the smoke was embedded in my skin.

LYNETTE CARR



Tails, left, and Dave. Lynette tried to save them but they both died in the fire

I was given oxygen and my wrist was dressed before I left the hospital in NHS pyjamas and trainers. A friend sent over clothes, but at first I couldn't bring myself to put them on. The prospect of wearing someone else's underwear was very strange. I washed my hair for the sixth time, tried to stop crying, and I went back to the house to find out about my cats.

It was a nightmare.The firemen had found little Tails curled up in a ball and put an oxygen mask on her but she was already dead. I could not stop crying. I stroked her and told her how sorry I was. Dave, Tails's mother in spite of her name, had not been found. I walked towards the house and found a burnt frame where the back door used to be. It looked like black treacle inside.

The firemen guided me upstairs to my bedroom. I tried to retrieve some of my lingerie. It was pointless. Everything was badly smoke damaged or scorched. The clothes rail, where my suits and evening dresses had hung, was still standing but the plastic hangers had melted and dripped on to the clothes. The sleeves of the blouses had been burnt off.

All the perfume on my dressing table had exploded apart from one bottle. The inner walls were partly down. There was no kitchen, just spindly wooden legs holding the work surfaces up. Cupboards had been burnt away. I had to leave; but I felt unsettled because Dave had not been found. The house had to be boarded up. The salvage company would empty it in two or three days, after the insurance company had dealt with the paperwork.

> 'I didn't think about myself. All I was concerned about was saving two very precious friends that meant the world to me'

I returned every day to put out cat food in the hope that Dave might have escaped. It was three days after the fire when she was found behind the television. She had been trying to get out of the front window, which I normally leave open. The thought turned my stomach.

"If only" constantly goes through my mind and keeps me awake at night. If only I had had a smoke alarm. At the time, I had not thought of myself and the possibility that I might not have been able to get out. All I was concerned about was saving two very precious friends that meant the world to me.

The first week after the fire was hard. Everything was sinking in and I found it very difficult to concentrate or even speak without crying. Yet there was so much to sort out — an inventory before the salvage company went in, somewhere to live for four months, new cheque books and credit cards. The day after, I had to deal with the press. Some days I felt terrible, and still guilty about the cats.

After the initial shock I booked myself into an hotel, where the staff have been very helpful. The insurance company covered the cost. The first few days were lonely. I had to adjust and try to put it all behind me and begin rebuilding everything I'd lost. The builders started work at the beginning of this week and the house should be habitable by the end of June.

My first instinct when I arrived at the hotel was to check out an escape route in case of a fire. It's been six weeks now and I still find it difficult to get to sleep.

Sometimes I wake up feeling the presence of my cats curled up in balls at the bottom of my bed. Then I realise they are not there. Material things can be replaced but loved ones cannot.

● *Lynette's fire was caused by a faulty fuel supply to her boiler. Four per cent of household fires are caused in this way.*

● *In 1996 (the latest year for which statistics are available) there were 50,000 accidental house fires in Britain and 500 people were killed.*

● *The London Fire brigade estimates that it can take just three minutes from ignition for a fire to become a blaze. Death from asphyxiation can occur in four minutes.*

● *Thirty per cent of homes are not fitted with smoke alarms.*

FIRE ALARM

MOST people are frighteningly ignorant of the basic rules of preventing fires in the home.

David Tuffin, an independent building surveyor, claims that electrical faults are the primary cause of house fires, so it is vital to check wiring regularly, especially in old houses. He also encourages people to plan alternative escape routes.

A thatched cottage is at particular risk of fire. The Thatching Advisory Services insure and advise thatch dwellers to protect their homes.

Houses most at risk of fire are older and lacking the safety features now mandatory in new homes, such as smoke alarms, fire resistant doors and furniture and circuit breakers.

The Association of British Insurers warns that too many people find they have been under-insured.

In short, homeowners should equip their houses with fire prevention materials and gadgets, and check their insurance and emergency exits.

ALICE HARDY

● *House Builders Federation (0171-608 5100)*
● *Thatching Advisory Services (07000 880828)*
● *Association of British Insurers (0171-600 3333)*
● *The Fire Protection Association, a subsidiary of The Loss Prevention Council, provides a free catalogue containing advice and information (0181-207 2345)*

Sue Herdman visits a former asylum in rural Oxfordshire about to be turned into flats

House of horror now called home

The tattered book on the floor is entitled *Nurses' Day Report*. "Patient found tied to bed with a thin piece of string," reads the first entry. "Inquiries revealed this has been done by another patient; all nurses please note that no patient is to be restrained unless ordered by the Resident Medical Officer."

The words are harrowing but not unexpected in this setting. "A nightmare abbey in spirit" is how architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner described Wyfold Court in Oxfordshire. It is a haunting, theatrical Gothic fantasy of a house which, for more than 60 years, was a mental asylum.

It closed in 1993 and since then has lain empty. But not for much longer: the grim hospital buildings in the ground are being pulled down and the central house awaits a challenging conversion into 11 apartments.

Built between 1872-78 for Edward Hermon, a cotton magnate from Lancashire, Wyfold Court is a reflection of Hermon's wealth and status and the flamboyance of his appointed architect George Sommers Clarke. But to many, the sight of the building still produces shudders.

Curious turrets jut out from the body of the building, topped with ugly gargoyles and embellished with traceried windows. Built of red brick, dressed with blue and yellow stone, the interiors are as outrageous as the outside.

Beyond the mullioned bay windows lie cavernous rooms with enormous fireplaces. The main hall has a massive wooden staircase leading the eye up to a timber roof. The place feels dark and foreboding, despite the large stained-glass windows.

The approach to the house through pine and larch woods is remembered clearly by Maureen Green, a patient at the asylum then known as Borocourt Hospital. The name was chosen because BOR are the first letters of Buckingham, Oxford and Reading — the local authorities which bought it jointly for £18,000 in 1930.

Now aged 54, Green was a patient from the age of 16 to 49. She was one of many young women sent to the hospital not because of mental instability but, bizarrely, to protect their chastity. Dressed in the shapeless, drab frocks issued by the nurses, Green was sent to work in the hospital factory making condoms.

MARTIN BEDDALL



Maureen Green in front of Wyfold Court asylum, where she was a resident for 33 years

Brought up in a tied farmworkers cottage, Wyfold Court was a breathtaking sight. "I'd never seen anything like it," she says. She came from the nearest village to the hospital but, like most locals, had never seen the house, as it lies so well hidden.

The nurses held dances in what had been the magnificent picture gallery where Hermon hung his art collection. Green and fellow patients (many of whom had been at Wyfold since infancy) would sit on the staircase and watch the dancing.

Her memories are, on the whole, happy ones although local folklore tells of Borocourt being a closed and sombre institution with patients locked in and counted three times a day. Knives and forks were banned. Many of the patients were extremely disturbed.

A remarkable number of important features remain unscathed. Elaborate frescoes, carvings and tiles are everywhere, as well as many of the paintings commissioned as part of the original decoration, including one of Pandora and her box. Slashed in places, it remains a ghostly testament to more opulent times.

This Grade II* treasure of a building has been a favourite location for film units, and was particularly featured in Hammer horror films. And many might recognise its entrance, staircase and corridors from the 1960s series *The Saint*.

At the time of its closure in March 1993, the last of Wyfold Court's patients moved out. Some of them had rarely been outside the hospital gates. They left behind workshops, a gym and kitchens that had served up to 500 people, but which were now in a sorry state of disrepair.

It was too expensive to maintain and inappropriate for further use as a hospital. But bids to create a luxury hotel, golf club or conference centre all came to nothing. Meanwhile, vandals smashed windows and destroyed the wiring.

Now, however, the future of Wyfold Court looks secure. Bellway Homes is building new homes in the grounds and the house is being converted into residential use, closing the door forever on the institution's recent past.

● *The agent for Wyfold Court flats is Hamptons, 01494 672969*

SMART MOVES



ANDIE McDOWELL (right), who starred opposite Hugh Grant in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, has been searching for a pad in Tuscany. No easy task, apparently. "We keep settling on a place and it keeps falling through," she recently told *OK! Weekly* magazine. The LA-based star has given up trying to buy. "We're looking to rent now," she said.

CROWHOLT, the former home of the **12th Duke of Bedford**, is available to let for £4,000 a month through Knight Frank. The five-bedroom house is adjacent to Woburn Abbey park. It has grounds of almost seven acres, with a swimming pool and stables.

THE six-bedroom Ladbroke Grove home of **Michael Nyman**, who composed the score for the film *The Piano*, is on sale through Leslie Marsh & Co for £850,000. Mr Nyman has recently been working with Damon Albarn of *Blur*. The house has a garden, a roof terrace and a studio.



THE **Spice Girls** (right) are rumoured to have bought a place in France. Reports are of a manor house in Biot, a village near Nice. If you cannot get to France, try Hampstead, where a four-bedroom house next to the block where Mel Brown (Scary Spice) rents a flat, is on sale through Savills for £975,000.

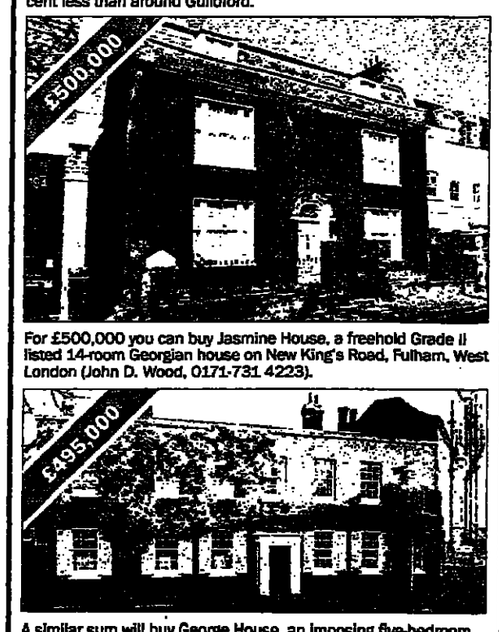
ADAM BARNARD

HOME SWAP

A SHORTAGE of good houses for sale in Fulham, West London, coupled with rising demand from City buyers, has driven prices up 30 per cent in the past year, according to estate agent John D. Wood. You can still find a one-bedroom flat for just over £100,000, but most homes cost a great deal more.

London émigrés priced out of Oxfordshire are moving over the border to Warwickshire, where house prices are 15 per cent lower, reports Knight Frank. The area around Stratford-upon-Avon is highly sought-after. A detached black-and-white timbered 17th-century cottage with a large garden can be bought for £200,000.

Similarly, high prices in Surrey are forcing London buyers to move further afield to West Sussex in search of better value. House prices around popular towns, such as Petworth and Midhurst, are 10 per cent less than around Guildford.



For £500,000 you can buy Jasmine House, a freehold Grade II listed 14-room Georgian house on New King's Road, Fulham, West London (John D. Wood, 0171-731 4223).

A similar sum will buy George House, an imposing five-bedroom Grade II listed Georgian and Tudor town house, in Petworth, West Sussex (Knight Frank, 01483 565171).



For even less you can buy Broad Marston Manor, a Grade II listed seven-bedroom, 16th-century stone manor house at Broad Marston, near Stratford-upon-Avon (Knight Frank, 01789 297735).

CHERYL TAYLOR

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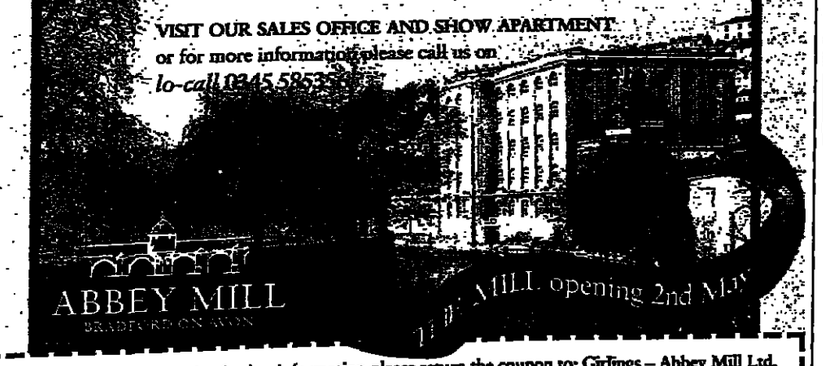
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Cosmetic surgery made this woman beautiful, but, says **Helen Rumbelow**, caution is the key

A nip here and a tuck there but who will I be in the morning?

An African tribesman with his lips distended by a large round film canister stared out at affluent London ladies in the audience. "This slide shows that you can enlarge anything, because people are elastic," said Roberto Veil, a doctor from the London Centre for Aesthetic Surgery. "But," he adds, "we know that the bigger the implant, the less natural the look."

London has just played host to the first independent cosmetic surgery exhibition. It was designed to make things simpler for the 70,000 people who have cosmetic surgery every year, and intent on convincing others to undergo treatment. Potential customers were mainly women in their thirties or forties, looking for a body or face change of one sort or another.

One of these is Sophie Ryan, a model. While a combination of good genes, careful living and excellent grooming conspired to make her look half her age, she was worried.

"I'm having a mid-life crisis," she said. "It was my 40th birthday last week, and it hit me that I may need to do something about the way I look. Of course, being youthful is all about attitude. But a nip and tuck helps."

The British, she maintained, have so far been terribly embarrassed about cosmetic surgery, with women keeping operations a secret and hiding away until the scars have healed — like the birth of an unwanted child in a 19th-century melodrama. "Americans just go to the supermarket in their bandages and are proud of them," she says.

While some treatments offered to remove fat, others wanted to inject it into cheeks; breasts could be plumped or drained; hair was either neatly removed or plugged into bald skin, and everything came with the silent enticement of getting you a job, a man, inner happiness, outer happiness, and a life.

Cindy Jackson, pictured here before and after, has had 27 cosmetic procedures in the past ten years and was evangelical about her remodelling, although she said she learnt the hard way. "People have surgery for different reasons," she said. "Some to hold on to what they've got, some to get back what they've had, and some to get what they've never had but always wanted. I put myself in all three categories."

But patients should get good advice, she added. "I have had some disasters. A laser treatment on my nose burnt the skin and took ages to heal. I had a useless facelift, and my breast implants had to be removed." As a result she set up the Cosmetic Surgery Network, which is built on ten years of research and aims to give useful information to women considering treatment.

Certainly the advice given by the doctors in explanatory lectures was pragmatic rather than glamorously euphemistic. Anthony Erian, from the Cambridge Private Hospital, illustrated his speech with graphic slides of what he termed "turkey neck", "bulldog neck" and finally a "neck obliterated by fat".

His before and after slides of women who were treated with a combination of liposuction, laser treatment and surgical tucks did show marked improvement, although, like most of the doctors, his before photos were styled like Myra Hindley mugshots and the after photos showed features and make-up in a softer focus.

Those looking for dramatic transformations would always be disappointed, he said. "I always get palpitations when a patient comes into the clinic wanting to look like Bo Derek. Either I can shoot myself, shoot the patient, or go home."

His talk was full of fascinating details about the industry: the angle looking up someone's nose is called "the loving position"; apparently it is only German women who prefer their upper lips to be fuller after collagen injections.

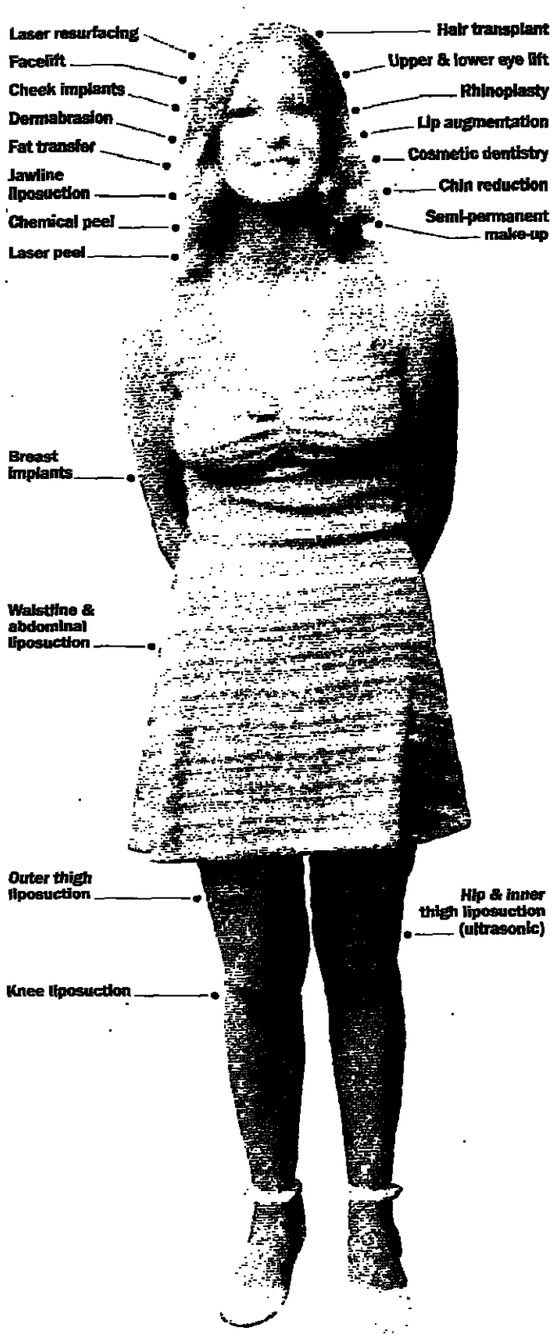
Botulism treatment (usually associated with food poisoning) is the latest to prove popular after plastic surgeons in Canada discovered that when injected into the skin, botulism freezes muscles, giving the face a smooth and relaxed appearance. The treatment, which lasts up to six months, costs about £200.

Two sisters proudly showed off their botulism-injected foreheads after the talk. "I'm really pleased with it, it's stopped me frowning," said the younger sister. The effect is disconcerting. When asked to "look amazed" her eyebrows tweak up a fraction. When asked to "look worried" her eyebrows shiver slightly. For "really angry" they hardly move. "What does it matter?" she says. "I was never going to go on the stage."

One doctor tried to address the deeper fears behind all this cosmetic frenzy. Will Clayton, from the Royal Free Hospital, said: "It's worth remembering that minor cosmetic blemishes can cause as much distress to the owner as something more severe." His advice seemed to fall on deaf, if not pinned-back, ears. Those at the showcase appeared to have caught the casual American good humour about surgical enhancement. If you have the money, why not make yourself look better, said one man, and if there was a risk, it was an acceptable one, just as those shaving risk cutting themselves every day.

As the exhibition drew to a close, a throng of women gathered around a woman having her laughter lines injected with collagen. As the nurse dabbed away at the droplets of blood, she gave a running commentary on the risks and the healing times.

"Just tell me," said a lone voice from the back, "will it make me look younger?"



SCIENCE PHOTO



A surgical team at work during an operation on a woman's eyelids



CHOOSE YOUR SURGEON CAREFULLY

PATIENTS should beware of cosmetic surgeons who prey on the hopes of clients without addressing their fears, say experts.

Dai Davies, a consultant plastic surgeon at Charing Cross Hospital and author of *Safe Cosmetic Surgery*, says people should approach cosmetic surgery like any major operation and consult their GP first.

"Clinics are not philanthropic, they are in business to make money. This makes them less likely to select patients judiciously, and the patients by their nature are vulnerable. That makes for an unhappy mix."

Patients should be aware that all procedures carry some risk, sometimes a serious one.

"Some surgeons are not very good at putting mistakes right, both in terms of the result and in the operation itself. They may not have the facilities to resuscitate or do major blood transfusions," he says. "Advisory telephone numbers for cosmetic surgery are especially bad. There's no regulation over them and people are naive to think they are giving impartial advice."

Patients should research the qualifications of their surgeon. They should be an FRCS — Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, which means they have a basic level of surgical training. If they are a member of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons it means they have reached the level of consultant plastic surgeon within the NHS, had at least six years experience and passed exams in their speciality. For a list of accredited members, ring 0171-405 2234.

● *Cindy Jackson's Cosmetic Surgery Network: 0181-209 0862; for more information send an sae to PO Box 3410, Highgate, London N6 4EE.*

Nowt so queer as moustached men

David Bowker has kissed many women with facial hair, but being gay for a week is harder



SEVEN LONG DAYS

LAST Monday, I made my wife a cup of tea — camomile and honey is wonderful for soothing frayed nerves — and asked her to sit down. I was tired of the deceit, the excuses, the hypocrisy. I was sick of living a lie.

"Darling, I've got something to tell you," I told her. "Something important."

She turned pale. "What?"

"I'm gay," I confessed.

There was a long silence. "I suppose I've always suspected." This annoyed me. We'd been sleeping together for 17 years. What was she getting at? "I'm not really gay," I retorted. "I'm just pretending for a newspaper article."

"Are you going to sleep with men?"

"Yes," I assured her. "Just not in the same bed. Or the same house. And I'm growing a moustache. What more do you want."

Now that I'd officially come out, I had to decide what kind of gay I wanted to be. I didn't want to be the John Inman/Julian Clary kind, because there were only so many jokes you can make about bending over. Nor did I wish to emulate writers like Joe Orton or Jean Genet, who were too keen on sex with men for my liking. I modelled myself on the Teletubby Tinky Winky, who wears a skirt, carries a handbag, but shows no interest in Dipsy's bottom.

My moustache took ten days to reach Village People proportions. The only males that wear moustaches these days are gays and men from Yorkshire. This can mean only one thing, that the majority of Yorkshiremen are raving queens.

When you think about it, it all adds up. Yorkshiremen call each other love, they're always going on about pride and they prefer the company of other men — preferably from Yorkshire. Hence that well-known Yorkshire saying: There's nowt so queer as folk. In the hope of mixing with people of my own kind, I caught a train to Leeds. I have a friend there: a gay postman called Angus. He has a moustache. Angus has always suspected me of being a closet gay. On seeing my moustache, his suspicion turned to conviction.

"You've come out," he declared triumphantly.

"Only for a week," I said. "Then I'm going straight back in again."

The only thing I've got against Angus, and gay men in general, is that they're always trying to out red-blooded heterosexuals like myself. "I've got a wife and son," I tell him.

"A blatant cover-up," he sneers.

"The thought of having sex with men makes me feel physically ill."

"What a give away," he insists.

Angus likes to go cottaging. He knows it's risky, but it gives him a thrill. I asked him for a list of the public lavatories in Leeds where gays were known to congregate, so I could go cottaging without the risk of being propositioned. This is how I ended up in the men's room at Lewis's department store, standing at a urinal for an hour with only the occasional pensioner for company. It was risky, but what a thrill!

After a few days of this behaviour, Angus grew impatient. "You're not gay. You're just a big poof. What'll your readers think when they find you haven't been near a man?"

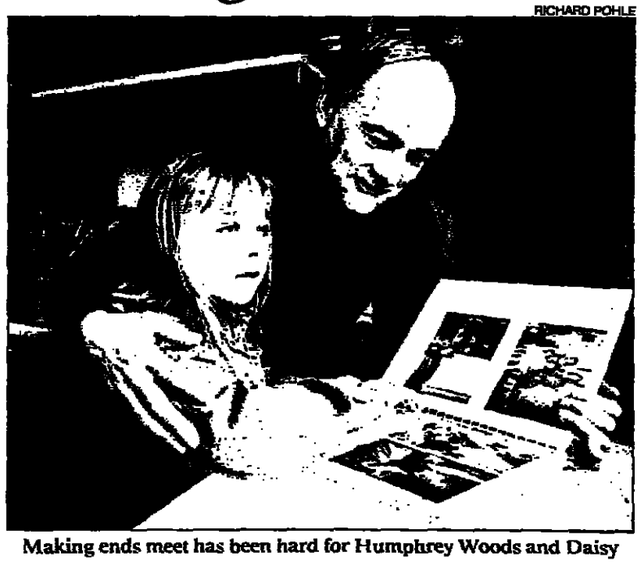
So we went to a gay club. Nothing happened. We got drunk and danced together all night. At the end of the evening, purely in the interests of research, Angus gave me a goodnight kiss.

It wasn't bad actually. It was like being kissed by a woman, albeit a woman with a moustache. But then again, I've spent most of my life being kissed by women with moustaches.

Fathers without partners are fighting for their child benefit rights, reports **Emma Haughton**

The plight of the single father

RICHARD POHLE



Making ends meet has been hard for Humphrey Woods and Daisy

Eight years ago Humphrey Woods had everything to look forward to. After battling with diabetes, his wife Linda was finally given the go-ahead for a child, and after a reasonable pregnancy gave birth to a daughter, Daisy. Six days later, however, Linda died of a massive heart attack. "It was a bolt from the blue," says Mr Woods. "She had no history of heart trouble so it was an absolute bombshell. I was torn in both ways, happy to have a child, grieving for my wife."

But Mr Woods's troubles had just begun. While he struggled with the nerve-racking business of new parenthood, a social worker broke the news that added insult to injury — he was not entitled to any state financial help. The reason? Because he was a man. Whereas widows receive a one-off payment of £1,000 and a weekly allowance of about £70 to £85, bereaved husbands get nothing.

"It seemed so abominable that men are treated like this," says Mr Woods. "As in many homes, my wife was the main earner, but everything is geared towards this idea of men as breadwinners, and all the pensions, insurance and benefits work that way."

After returning part-time to his job as stock controller, eight months later Mr Woods was made redundant. His income has now dropped to a third of the £300 a week he once received. "It would have been much easier if I'd been a woman," he says.

"A widower's benefit would make an incredible difference. Food is obviously a priority and people help out with clothes for Daisy, but it's the creeping wear and tear that gets you down, not being able to replace things that break or wear out. It's very depressing."

Mr Woods became so incensed by his situation that he set up the Campaign for Widowed Fathers' Benefits, which advises the 150 fathers who are widowed every week. "The government insists that men are usually working when they are widowed so they can afford it, but the benefit would make the difference between staying in the family home or keeping the children in their schools," he says.

"One man had to get rid of the family dog because he could no longer feed it, but an awful lot more have had to give up work because they can't afford childcare. It's even more disturbance and hardship for children already beset by grief."

Whereas women have gained enormous ground outside the home, it seems that men still get a raw deal within it. From the beginning, British men are not entitled to paternity leave or even time off for the birth. While other European fathers can take up to three months unpaid leave, currently Britain's opt out from the Social Charter leaves paternity leave to employer's discretion. The best offer is around two weeks, but most allow two to three days, compared with the 14 to 29 weeks women can take off.

But it is often further down the line, when a relationship hits the rocks, that men really lose out, as novelist Jim Parton discovered when his wife left him in 1992. "I was working at home while my wife was a busy TV executive, so I thought our child should live with me. But the court welfare officer wrote quite a damning report, which I felt was very biased towards my wife, and the judge ruled in her favour."

His experience propelled him into the chair of support group Families Need Fathers and spawned a novel, *Unreasonable Behaviour* (Simon & Schuster, £15.99). But despite being on good terms with his ex-wife, his son is now living in Japan and Mr Parton is excluded from decisions about his future. "There is nothing really I can do. Sometimes I feel I should draw a line under the whole thing and say 'See you when you're 18'."

Rosemary Carter, family lawyer at London-based Barnett Sampson and vice chair of the Solicitors Family Law Association, confirms that the legal system is still biased towards mothers. "Judges say that there is no basic discrimination, but the reality is that it's still generally thought that young children should be with their mother."

According to Mr Parton, even those who'd settle for being hands-on fathers, rather than full-time carers, can find it an uphill battle. "Mothers break court orders for contact and judges do nothing," he says. "Only the most determined men can tackle that."

But recently proposed amendments to the law have highlighted the plight of thousands of unmarried fathers.

Even those whose details are included on the birth certificate have no say over the upbringing of their child if their relationship flounders — a mother can even put the child up for adoption without the father's consent.

The only solution is to apply for parental responsibility through the courts, but most men are unaware of the need to, says Ms Carter. "Unmarried fathers really have no rights at all, but there is enormous ignorance about it. They talk in terms of common-law marriage, but it's a load of nonsense." Although applications for parental responsiblity are rarely refused, it can cost several hundred pounds for even a straightforward case.

Not surprisingly, men are now fighting back.

In 1966 van driver Robert Stennings received compensation at a tribunal for dismissal for insisting on attending his wife's birth; currently two fathers are taking the government to the European Court of Human Rights over benefits for widowers.

Yet another skirmish in the eternal battle of the sexes? More a just war, say thousand of beleaguered fathers, and one that they cannot afford to lose.

● *Campaign for widowed fathers 0171-955 5886.*

● *Families Need Fathers 0171-564 6191.*

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا في الأصل

'There are – it is true – distinct advantages to the state of adulthood, of which not having to go to school is certainly the greatest'

The trials of being a little big man

LIFE AND SOUL



JANE SHILLING

When I was a very little girl, I had a book called *The Very Little Girl*. It had beautiful, French-ified illustrations, by an artist called Ninon, in lime green and black and a sort of boudoir pink, and a story (not, admittedly, of great complexity) about a very little girl, who was smaller than a rosebush, smaller than her friends, so small that she had to have a special little table and bed and chair. And then one day she found that she was bigger than her cat, and bigger than her dog, and too big for her special little bed and so on.

Even at the age of five or so, it struck me, dimly, that there was a certain whiff of *Et in arcadia ego* about this narrative. Despite, or perhaps because of that, I loved the book, and so, decades later, rather to my amazement, did Alexander when he was very small. Its brief moment of resurrection is over, however, because these days Alexander despises little girls and all their works, and is himself engaged in getting bigger at a prodigious rate.

The way small children grow is very strange. They don't do it steadily, like cats and dogs and plants, but overnight, in bursts of six inches or so at a time. Since last month, Alexander is too large to fit in the seat on the supermarket trolley (a source of anguish to him, this, since he can no longer engage in scholarly contemplation of his *Beano* while I trundle him from aisle to aisle, trying to find where they have hidden the Marmite); he is tall enough to reach the latch on the front door and, if the fancy takes him, abscond.

The other day I asked him if, since I was busy on the telephone, he would be so good as to go and turn the oven off, as I thought his lunch was ready. "It's a little bit burned, but not much," he said cheerfully, returning. "Argh!" I said. "You opened the oven door?" "Yeah," he said, "but I used the oven gloves. I always do."

It is only now that he is breast high, with legs like chestnut saplings, that I realise the extent to which I used to employ brute force to impose my will over things like getting washed and dressed and into bed. Even now, I have some difficulty in convincing myself that he is not, in fact, some handily detachable part of my own body. I suppose I'll have got over this by the time he is 18 or so.

With the dramatic increase in size has come a new, politically correct vocabulary. I am not allowed to call it babysitting any more. "*Big boy* sitting," he says, giving me a terrifying glare. I thought I'd got him the other day. "What with you being such a big boy and all," I said, "it's probably time I took the fairy wheels off your bike." "*Stabilisers!*" he said, adding gloomily, "you'd better not. I'll fall off. I'm too small to ride a bike without them."

"Ha! Which is it then?" said I, in triumph. "Are you big, or are you little?" "Sometimes," said the child, composedly. "I am big. And other times I am little. It depends."

This is the sort of sophistry which, when I engaged in it as a child, used to make my sailor grandfather snort, "swim one way like a haddock" — a mysterious idiom which is presumably nautical in origin, though I can't find it in *Jackspeak*, Rick Jolly's useful glossary of Navy slang.

I'm also having to get used to the idea that I know nothing. Almost everything I do is corrected (where *can* he have learned this maddening habit?). "Alexander," I say, in my north Oxford cockney, "you are 'ilarious." "Huh," says the pocket Professor Higgins at my side. "Huh, huh, huh-larious. *Not* 'ilarious. Go on. Say it properly."

Pronunciation is a particular bugbear at the moment, complicated by the fact that, like Bernard Shaw, he seems to be devising his own system of Rational Spelling and Pronunciation. "What's politics?" he asked one evening (I was reading him *Lord Lundy* at the time). Er, well, it is the process by which the country is run. And people elect Members of Parliament to represent them. And the person in charge of it all is the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who I expect you have seen on the telly.

"Tonny," said Alexander. "Eh?" "Tonny Blair. If you said it *Toe-nee*, you'd have to spell it T-O-N-E-Y." Oh, I see. Perhaps someone should let the Prime Minister know.

Along with the withering scorn, there are frequent references to something known as the Gunge Tank. This features in a programme called *Get Your Own Back*, in which, he tells me, children get to tip tiresome adults into a vat of green slime. Since he has been going on about this, I have had the feeling that he is planning something. He keeps eyeing me, speculatively, like Albert Pierrepoint calculating a drop. "It would be nice," he keeps saying, "if we could have our own gunge tank. We could keep it in the garden."

Still, I notice that the utter hopelessness of adults hasn't quite put him off being one. There are, it is true, distinct advantages to the state, of which not having to go to school is certainly the greatest.

And also, "I wish I was big enough to live my yearning," he said this morning. "Oh, darling," I said, drippily, "being big is no guarantee of that, I am afraid. What sort of yearning did you have in mind?" "Going out to work and yearning lots of money to buy trains. Like you do."

When baby means business

Children can be the inspiration to make millions, says **Sharon Maxwell Magnus**

SIMON WALKER



Philip Davies, co-founder of the successful Crechendo children's gym classes, with his own children, Georgia, five, and Guy, three. He says: "Our first session was chaos"

When Caroline Clark, 39, had her third baby she had no idea he would provide the inspiration for starting her own fledgeling business. Clark, a lawyer, had already had babies in America and Japan. "But when I went into stores here, I was shocked by how limited the selection of baby equipment was. There were none of those clever little items that make life with a child so much easier."

Every time Clark went to the United States, she would lug back a suitcase of must-have items for her children, now aged nine, seven and four. "My British friends took one look and asked me to get one for them too. I realised there had to be a business opportunity," she says.

When she was introduced to Alyssa Lovegrove, 38, another US-expat and management consultant, they decided to give up their jobs and give birth to their own baby business. Within a year, The Great Little Trading Company, a mail order firm selling ingenious baby and children's gadgets — a sort of Innovations for kids — was launched.

The company's bestsellers include a seat-belt adjuster for kids too big for a booster seat, self-tie shoelaces and a children's first aid kit. By the end of the first year's trading, the company was in profit. Three years on, turnover is £1.5 million.

The experience of Clark and Lovegrove echoes the movie *Baby Boom*, where Diane Keaton abandons the world of high-flying corporate slavery to find happiness selling home-made baby food in the sticks.

Working parents, short on time, long on money, are increasingly trying to assuage guilt feelings by buying luxuries and convenience goods for their children, making the children's market a real business proposition.

Clark and Lovegrove sank £100,000 of savings into production and market research (carried out largely on their children's friends). "It's a definite advantage being a parent," says Lovegrove, whose children are now four, two and one. "The children act as testers, give us ideas for products and are our catalogue models, too."

For Lovegrove and Clark, the chief advantage of running their own business has been the flexibility. At first, they worked at Lovegrove's house, with children toddling in and out of the office. Now they have their own premises, but the children still play ball off the walls. Clark says: "I dictate the schedule. That means I can pick my daughter up from hockey or my son from judo. I never have to be in the office just for the sake of being there, which is often the case in a big corporation. I'm still a working mother but I've found a balance that works."

The US has provided the inspiration for many ideas for the children's market. Philip Davies, 38, and Nigel Wragg, 49, decided to form Crechendo — which runs parent and toddler gym sessions — after seeing similar ones in Beverly Hills. "We'd sold our business running children's activity holidays and were keen to stay in the children's market as Wragg had just started a family," Davies says.

Nevertheless, he admits that nothing had prepared them for the teething problems of having to deal with 20 turbo-charged toddlers out for a good time. "Our first session was chaos. The children screamed and we had to buy them off with toy clowns."



A Crechendo customer

Eight years on Crechendo has 70 staff, a turnover of £725,000 and high-profile clients such as Melanie Griffiths and Sinead O'Connor. Davies is concentrating on administration and growing the programme in the regions. However, he feels that being a father to Georgia, five, and Guy, three, means he is not distanced from life on the playmat.

When Crechendo started, the main thrust was toddler gym sessions. By serendipity, Wragg's wife provided the inspiration for the second string of the business by suggesting Crechendo should organise her firm's children's party. Now corporate and private parties account for almost half of their business, with clients including British Airways and the BBC.

Davies recalls how one visiting royal family rang up late on Friday, wanting an extravaganza with face-painters, a gym session and video-footage organised for their one-year-old prince that Sunday. "It was like Challenge Anneka to get it all done on time, but we did," he says. Davies says that people are surprised that men are the brains behind Crechendo. "We get very few men coming along," he says, adding that any dad brave enough to venture in receives a free T-shirt.

He feels that Crechendo has changed his own perception of a father's role. "I'm more laid-back about when the children reach developmental milestones, because I've seen the whole range in our classes," he says. "But I've also learnt just how important it is for fathers to go along to their children's activities. I'm evangelical about getting dads to join in."

A business venture was the last thing in Mandy Haberman's mind when she had her daughter, Emily, 18 years ago. Haberman, a graphic designer, had one-year-old twins when newborn Emily was diagnosed as having Stickler's syndrome, a condition which causes feeding difficulties. "We couldn't get anything down her and she lost so much weight," Haberman says.

ALAN WELLER



Great Little Traders: Alyssa Lovegrove, left, and Caroline Clark with their children

Emily was transferred to Great Ormond Street Hospital, where she was tube-fed for four months. Then Haberman improvised a feeder, using a dummy and syringe. It worked, but she was determined to make something more professional. She says: "I felt angry about what we'd been through because feeding is so important to the mother-baby relationship. I had to invent something to prevent others going through what we had. I talked to paediatricians and started designing on the kitchen table."

> 'It's better being a parent. The children act as testers'

The result was the Haberman Feeder for babies who have feeding problems, such as a cleft palate. Although the leading companies were not interested in developing this niche product, Haberman put it into production herself and marketed it in hospitals. "It made a small income, but that suited me because I was at home with my children. It also allowed me to finance the next project," she says.

Inspiration for the next project, The Anywayup cup (a spill-proof toddler beaker), came when she visited a friend's pristine home. "Her sister was there with her baby. Every time the baby tossed the beaker on the floor, the poor woman rugby-dived to catch it before the Ribena got to the carpet. I thought there had to be a better way."

Once again Haberman set to in her kitchen. It took five years to design the product, patent it and make up the prototypes, with Haberman investing more than £30,000. "That made me very nervous, but no one dared tell me I was off my rocker. I was determined to make it work." One company offered to make the cup under licence, but Haberman, who had licensed the Haberman Feeder overseas, was wary. "But I know I'm an inventor, not a salesperson. I needed someone who had marketing expertise."

Haberman teamed up with V&A Marketing which persuaded her to launch the cup at a baby products fair. They took £10,000 of orders in two days. This year's sales are estimated at more than four million cups worldwide, with a turnover of £5 million.

Nevertheless, Haberman has no intention of bottling up further creativity and is now designing a new breast pump, as well as the Anyware range of children's tableware.

"I'm always seeing gaps in the children's market," she says. "I'd say to anyone who has an idea to go for it — but do be sure you've got sufficient staying power, both financially and emotionally."

STARTING OUT

- If you've come up with an idea for a new product, take out a patent for one year. This will give you time to assess market potential and production. Keep your idea confidential.
- Make a detailed business plan. You need to ascertain if there is a market for your service, what to charge, work out costs and how you will handle cash-flow. "You need a contingency plan whether things don't go well or badly," says David Moule, business development manager at Hertfordshire Business Link. "Lack of planning is a major problem with start-ups."
- Know the competition. Research competing products and services, says Rosemary Savage, small business and business products manager for the Midland Bank. Keep monitoring the competition.
- Be flexible. "A small business person has to have a raft of skills," says David Moule. "You need to understand accounts, marketing, sales, and deal with all areas of the business, not just those you like." If you have a weakness, hire someone to deal with that area.
- Getting established takes commitment and tenacity. You need to believe in the product — and yourself.

Setting up is no child's play

MARK THOMAS



The toy reassembled to become a dining table

Setting up a children's business may sound like child's play, but beware. Despite the success stories, one in two new businesses fail within five years.

The children's market is particularly volatile. Inventorlink, an agency that helps inventors to produce and market their products, is offered 600 ideas for the children's market each year and takes about 35. "It's very competitive," Lucy Freeman, the PR director, says. "There are new products all the time and it's easy for big companies to copy ideas."

She also points out that inventors are often naive. "They'll show off their idea to their neighbours without realising that anyone can nip down the patents office before them. It also pays to be aware of trends in children's marketing — you can get a good idea just by strolling around Mothercare or Hamleys."



The Castle Jigsaw cunningly assembled as a toy

Even if an agency takes on your product, riches are not guaranteed. Last year, Inventorlink was excited by Baby Karma — a dummy that plays a soothing lullaby when the baby cries. Manufacturers seemed enthusiastic but so far haven't taken it. Other products looking for homes include a nappy that sounds an "alarm" when it gets wet and a cape that protects clothes from the ill-effects of burping babies.

For Paul Simpson, 41, the designer of the Castle Jigsaw Dining Table (a castle puzzle that when put together forms a dining table), it's been a slog to establish his business. He came up with the idea while helping his oldest son with a school project.

Mr Simpson had been made redundant as a car salesman and producing the novelty table seemed an ideal business opportunity. "But I made plenty of mistakes along the way," he says. "I lost £3,000 in the first year on magazine advertising.

"Although people responded to the advertisements, the tables are hand crafted and therefore expensive and they weren't prepared to spend £5,000 for something bought by mail order."

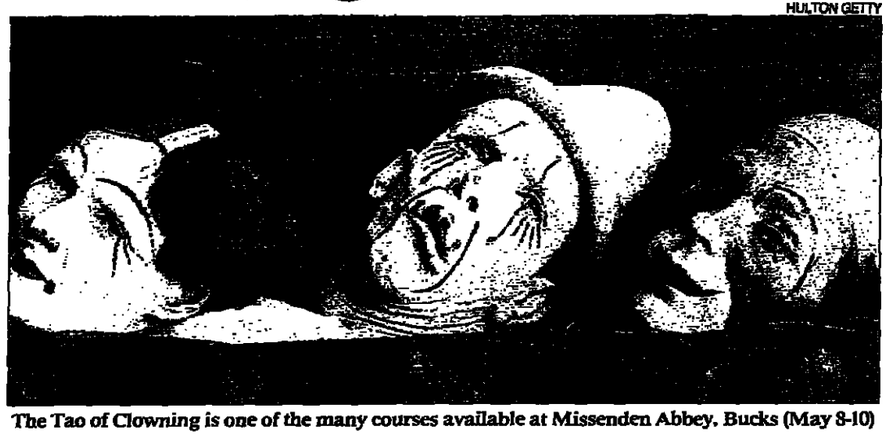
He also had several false starts with suppliers. Now he feels the tables are turning. This year, he will make £5,000. "I'd like to sell five tables a month," he says wistfully. "I just need to get costs down. Despite all the difficulties I still believe in pursuing my dream."

SMM

WEEKEND COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Never pull punches if clowning around

HULTON GETTY



The Tao of Clowning is one of the many courses available at Missenden Abbey, Bucks (May 8-10)

CORBIS



Men should steer clear of the Assertiveness for women course at Alston Hall Residential College, Preston, which could take a leaf from Pearl White, pictured in the film *Plunder* (May 8-10)

MAY 1-3

Spring into summer. A four-day health and fitness weekend, with yoga, exercises, workouts, pool sessions and line dancing at the Earnley Concourse, Chichester, Sussex (01243 670392). Price £218 residential, £144 non-residential.

Surfing, windsurfing, ski surfing, kayaking, Canadian canoeing, sailing, climbing. At Outdoor Adventure, Bude, Cornwall (01288 361312). Weekend rates from £123, inclusive of full board, tuition and equipment.

A flute weekend: The intermediate cellist. At Benslow Music Trust, Hitchen, Herts (01462 459446). Prices from £87 to £111, inclusive.

Bird song: A badger weekend. At the Field Studies Council Centre, Preston Montford, Shrewsbury (01743 850380). Prices per course from £75-£105.

Advanced bridge: *Don Giovanni*: Patchwork and quilting: Architectural clues. At the Hill Residential Centre, Abergavenny, Gwent (01495 333777). Price per course, £88.

Life and landscape painting: China painting: Bridge: Continental lacemaking. At the Horncastle College, Horncastle, Lincs (01507 522449). Price per course £96.

MAY 8-10

Have a go at rock climbing. At the Castle Head Field Centre, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria (01539 534300). Price £120 residential, £96 non-residential, including equipment and instruction.

Assertiveness for women: Viol consort playing: The City of Rome. At Alston Hall Residential College, Longridge, Preston (01772 784661). Price per course from £75-£100.

Glass — from the Renaissance to the present day: Literary prize winners. At Maryland College, Woburn, Milton Keynes, Bucks (01525 292901). Prices from £99 residential and £76 non-residential.

Spring Gardens: Photography: Embroidery. At Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon (01803 866688). Prices from £150 residential and £130 non-residential.

Bird songs and calls: Walking with a sketchbook: Watercolours for absolute beginners: Microscopy for beekeepers. At the Flatford Mill Field Centre, East Bergholt, Suffolk (01206 298283). Prices per course £105 residential, £85 non-residential.

Spring Birds. At the University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall (01954 210636). Price £120, inclusive.

A festival of Verdi: The Tao of Clowning: Still-life painting — Cézanne: Landscape and garden history: An introduction to home interior design: Large-format photography. At Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden, Bucks (01494 890296). Weekend prices from £159 residential and £69 non-residential.

An introduction to croquet: Relax with raffia: Flowers in watercolour: Bridge for improvers. At the Old Rectory, Fittleworth, Pulborough, Sussex (01798 865306). Prices from £114 residential and £90 non-residential.

Cavaliers and roundheads, a weekend on the English Civil War. At Wedgwood Memorial College, Barlaston, Staffordshire (01782 372105). Price £70, inclusive.

Winston Churchill — a study in leadership. At Wansfell College, Theydon Bois, Essex (01992 813027). Price £85, inclusive.

A Pottery Weekend in Leominster. With Acorn Activies of Hereford (01432 830083). Price £144. Also an **Air-experience weekend** flying in helicopter, balloon, microlight and glider, £325, inclusive.

A singer's workshop: Ancient Egyptian painting. At Wensum Lodge, King Street, Norwich (01603 666021). Price per course £84.

Rock climbing, mountaineering and canoeing, walking and scrambling in the Peak District. With Peak Odysseys of Eccleshall (01785 850314). Prices from £120 for two days.

MAY 15-17

Bread-making courses on English period breads and cakes for enthusiastic amateurs and professional cooks. At the Village Bakery, Melmerby, Penrith, Cumbria (01768 881515). Two-day courses £250, inclusive.

A foundation course for strings: Further musical theory. At the Benslow Music Trust, Hitchen, Herts (01462 459446). Price from £87 to £115, inclusive, depending on the course and accommodation.

Photography — working with close-ups and flash: Family bird-watching: Improve your watercolours: Behind the scenes at National Trust properties in Suffolk: Painting and drawing for families. At the Flatford Mill Field Centre, East Bergholt, Sussex (01206 298283). From £105 residential, £85 non-residential.

George Gershwin centenary course: Flower painting. At Higham Hall, Cockermouth, Cumbria (017687 76276). Price per course £112 residential.

Computing with Windows 95: Patchwork and quilting: Lichens: Drawing for watercolours. At Knuston Hall Residential College, Irchester, Wellingborough, Northants (01933 312104). £92 per course.

Divided visions — Britain and Ireland, 1798-1922: Flowers and birds of early spring. At Maryland College, Woburn, Bedfordshire (01525 292901). Price per course £99.

Completing your tax return: Writing romantic fiction: Advanced French conversation: Exploring acrylics: Honiton lace. At Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden, Bucks. (01494 890296). Prices from £159 residential and £69 non-residential.

Clarinet and flute weekend: Fabric painting for fun: Introduction to desktop publishing. At the Old Rectory, Fittleworth, Pulborough, Sussex (01798 865306). Price from £114 residential and £90 non-residential.

Creative-drawing workshop: Calligraphy for today — Gothic: Silversmithing projects: Stained glass. At West Dean College, Chichester, Sussex (01243 811301). Prices from £150 residential.

A Cookery course on fabulous French cuisine: Getting the best out of your relationships: Learn to swim: Singing for pleasure. At Earnley Concourse, Chichester, Sussex (01243 670392). Price £149 residential, £103 non-residential.

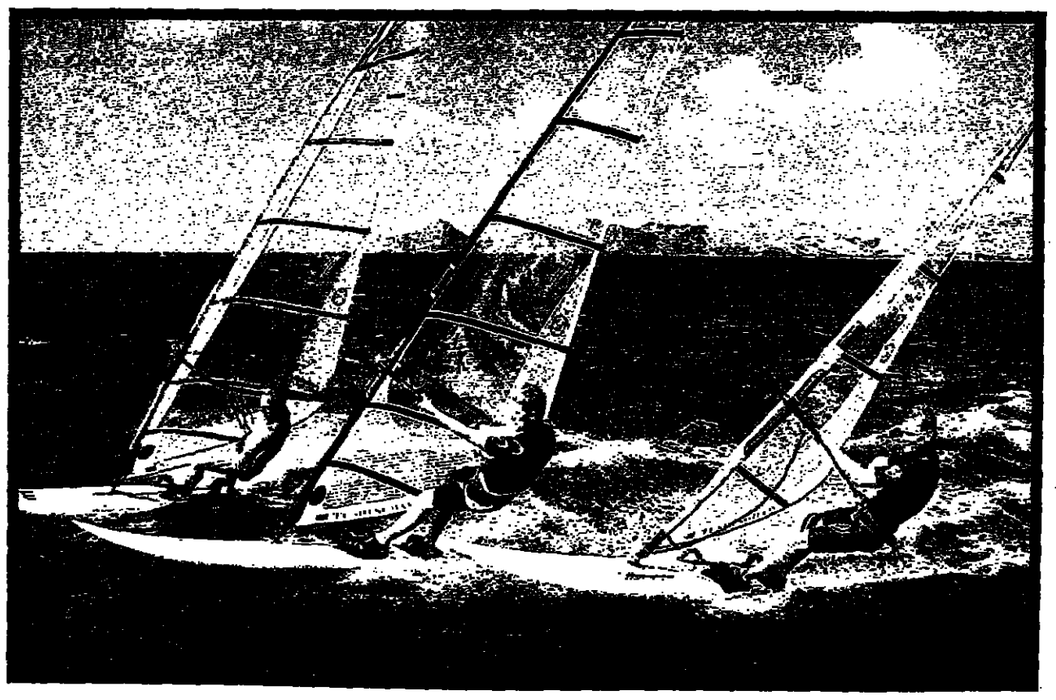
ROBIN NEILLANDS

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

ADVENTURES FROM £5

Starting today, readers of *The Times* are offered the chance to enjoy more than 30 adventure activities, some from as little as £5. For a superb adrenalin rush, why not sail away on a windsurf, a sport you can do on your own, with friends or older and younger members of the family?



WINDSURFING

It is National Try Windsurfing Week from June 13-21 when more than 80 centres nationwide will offer two hours of tuition from a Royal Yachting Association qualified instructor. All the necessary equipment is provided, including a wetsuit. As a *Times* reader you can enjoy this fantastic session for just £5 (normally a session costs about £20) plus £3, for one month's temporary RYA membership which includes full RYA third-party windsurfing insurance for the month. Or you can take part as a family which includes two adults and up to three children under 16 years old for £31. Sessions need to be booked and taken by the end of June 1998. Simply call *The Times* windsurfing hotline: **0990 100 500** for a list of participating venues and your voucher.

RYA ROYAL YACHTING ASSOCIATION

TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association is offering Times readers 25 per cent discount on membership: £11.25 junior, £18.75 adult, and £26.25 family . Membership Department, **The Lawn Tennis Association**, The Queen's Club, Palliser Rd, W14 9EG. (Offer ends June 1, 1998.)

SPEEDWAY RACING

The Elite Speedway League is offering two tickets for the price of one for events from June 10-24 inclusive. Post your tokens and coupon to *Times* Promotion, **British Speedway Promoters Association**, BSPA Office, ACU House, Wood St, Rugby, CV21 2YX.

HOW TO TAKE PART

Times readers can save up to 50% or more on a wide range of adventure activities until July 31, 1998.

- Simply book your visit in advance by telephone with one of the centres listed in the *Wild Spirits* supplement (free with today's *Times*) and attach four differently numbered tokens from *The Times* to the coupon below.
- Each completed coupon entitles you to any offer (individual, group or family) featured.
- A total of 13 tokens and five coupons will be printed in *The Times* until Saturday May 9, enabling you to try as many as three different activities if you wish.
- If you did not receive a free *Wild Spirits* supplement with your *Times* today, please send an A4 stamped, sae to: *Wild Spirits* Request, *The Times* Customer Services Dept, PO Box 481, Virginia Street, London E1 9BD.



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS Only original differently numbered tokens are accepted: four per individual, family or group activity. Offers must be taken by July 31, 1998 unless otherwise stated. Where it is agreed with, or directed by, the supplier that you can take up the activity after the offer validity date, this should be confirmed in writing. This offer cannot be used with any other offer and is subject to availability. Readers are responsible for checking prices and details at the time of booking and for their own holiday and accident insurance.

MONDAY: CLIMBING AND MULTI-ACTIVITY

CHANGING TIMES

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الأصل



Adrian Francis, the Barnum and Bailey of terrier racing

Alasdair Riley meets the terrier lover putting the fun back into racing



ROBIN MAYES

As well as putting dogs through traditional terrier races, dog owners at the Gamekeeper and Countryman fair in Redbourn, enter into the spirit of the free-for-all

From the doghouse to a trap

"This kind of terrier sport is showbusiness pure and simple," says Adrian Francis, the man who has put a Barnum and Bailey atmosphere into the formerly old-fashioned rural pursuit of terrier racing.

Certainly, there's no smell of greasepaint to leaven the whiff of horse and hound, but his act would not be out of place in a circus. He works a tough audience as professionally as any ringmaster.

Francis buys his props at charity shops — old fur coats which he chops up into into fake rabbit lures for his 15 Jack Russell terriers to chase. His fellow dog-lover, Deborah, Duchess of Devonshire, who probably buys her fur coats elsewhere, also knows the value of keeping this show on the road.

Chatsworth, the Derbyshire seat of her husband's family for more than 500 years, opens its grand doors to the public seven days a week and is home to one of England's largest annual country fairs. The Duchess and Nobby, her lurcher, are regular and enthusiastic participants in the free-for-all that ends Francis's roadshow.

"The free-for-all is the bit they love the most — dogs and owners," says Francis, a former professional huntsman in both stables and kennels. "I've seen more than 100 dogs in the arena, from rottweilers to chihuahuas and Irish wolfhounds to corgis, all chasing an old piece of fur. Or each other," he says.

Country fairs take place most weekends from now until autumn. Francis, with his five-man team and his dogs, will be taking part in at least 20 of them. And if the evidence of a recent weekend at Hertfordshire county showground is anything to go by, they will draw the biggest crowds to the main arena.

Thousands of people braved wind and rain to watch his dogs racing an 80-yard course, first on the flat, then over 18-inch high fences. Four at a time, they burst from the traps, reaching speeds of up to 25mph as they chased the furry lure on a revolving wire powered by an upside-down bicycle.

Sometimes dogs refused fences, ran around them or burst through them. Some escaped into the crowd. Occasionally they skidded to a halt, cartoon-fashion, then shot back to where they had come from as the lure reversed direction in a split second. A couple of four-month-old Jack Russell puppies showed little interest in the proceedings, but won lots of oohs and aahs.

The more his dogs seemed to get things wrong, the more Adrian Francis liked it.

"Of course they get things wrong occasionally. I tell the crowd that my dogs are going to do one thing, knowing full well they are likely to do just the opposite. Spectators, who are invited to join in with their dogs right from the start, love it."It all builds up to a carefully planned climax when people can't wait to bring their dogs into the ring to take part — if they haven't already.

Francis, 55, has been a country lover all his life and has been second-huntsman all over Britain.

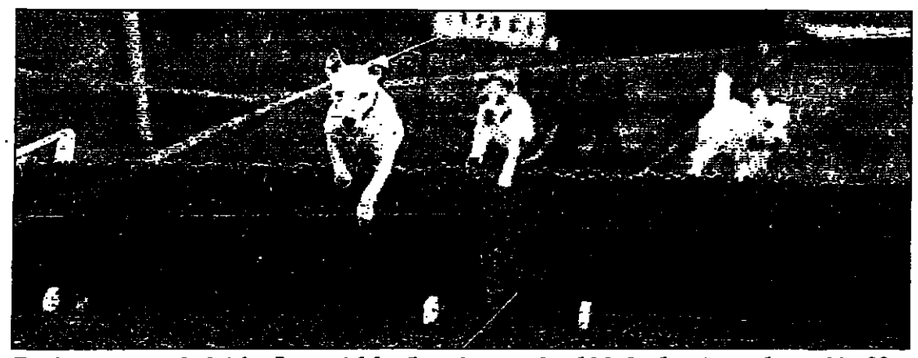
"Hunting people use terrier shows, which have existed for ages, as a summer social occasion, and I've been showing my dogs at them for as long as I can remember," he says. "There will be at least 20 every weekend throughout the country from now until October.

"Terrier racing, which was a natural progression from showing terriers, must have started about 50 years ago. But because the racing — pure terrier racing — is just a straightforward sprint from the start to the finishing line. Although it is exciting for those taking part, it can become boring for spectators after half-an-hour. So I decided to add a showbusiness element to it.

"So we brought it into the main arena at country fairs in the mid-Eighties, working up an act with plenty of canine slapstick comedy, enough deliberate mistakes to keep the audience laughing and an invitation to owners to bring their dogs into the ring.

"It soon became clear that the bit spectators liked most was when everyone could bring their own dogs into the arena to join in.

Participation is the key to it all — just as it is with every pet."



Terriers appear to be having fun on Adrian Francis's race, in which the dogs get to chase a bit of fur



Terriers are friendly and active

● *Adrian Francis's Terrier Roadshow can be seen at the Pets Pets Pets Show, sponsored by* The Times, *which is being held at Tatton Park, Cheshire from May 3-4: Wollaton Park, Nottingham from May 16-17, Highclere Castle, Berkshire, on May 30-31; Harewood House, Leeds on June 6-7; Knebworth, Stevenage, on June 20-21. See below for special ticket offer.*

FACT FILE

■ The Parson Jack Russell, named after The Rev John Russell, a West Country hunting vicar who died in 1883, was not recognised as a standard breed by the Kennel Club until 1991. This put up the price of a puppy tenfold, to more than £100.

■ The Parson Jack Russell is part of the terrier group, of which there are almost 30 breeds in Britain.

■ Their name derives from the Latin *terra*, meaning "earth". Their popularity grew in Britain's urban and industrial areas in the 18th and 19th centuries, to control vermin.

■ Terriers come in many shapes, sizes and coat colours. Parson Jack Russells are bold, friendly and workmanlike, active and agile, built for speed and endurance.

■ They require little grooming, moderate exercise and are at home in both town and country. They live to more than nine years, and cost about £4 a week to feed.

● *Parson Jack Russell Terrier Club (01905 821440)*
● *The Jack Russell Terrier Club of Great Britain (0181-427 4279)*
● *National Working Terrier Federation (01234 768191)*

A VET WRITES

Q I bought two baby red-eared terrapins three years ago, an inch in diameter. Now I have two voracious adults more than 6in long. They've given me several painful bites, and they're not very attractive. Do you know how I could find them a good home — or could I just let them go free?

A The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it an offence to release "any animal which is not normally resident in, or a regular visitor to, Great Britain in a wild state..." We have enough problems with non-native species already, such as Canada geese, grey squirrels and muntjac deer, without American red-eared terrapins. As for finding a home, you can ask your local zoo, aquarium or the RSPCA, but I don't rate your chances. I advise you buy a bigger tank and use gloves or forceps for hand feeding. In time, your love may blossom again.

Q I've been told wild parrots eat soil to help their digestion and neutralise poisonous toxins in their food. Is this true and should I provide some soil for Noisy, my Amazon parrot? I've had him for four years and he's thriving on ordinary parrot mixture, bits of fruit, clean water, grit and cuttlefish.

A Noisy — an appropriate name for an Amazon. They are. There is no need to change his diet — he's living proof that it's adequate. When food is short, wild birds may have to eat unripe fruit, leaves or nuts containing poisonous substances. Soil can absorb or neutralise these.

JAMES ALLCOCK

● *Write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. He regrets that he cannot reply to letters personally.*

ADOPT ME



Kizzy: lively and loving

KIZZY is a two-year-old yellow Labrador-crossbreed. She is a lively and affectionate dog which would suit a home with children and other dogs, but needs medication and a special diet for a dietary condition. Under a special fostering scheme, the National Canine Defence League would assist with vet's fees.

If you would like to be able to adopt Kizzy please contact the NCDL, Ballymena, Northern Ireland. 01266 652977.

A super-furry-animals curative

Animal therapy is being recognised as a remedy to bring relief to the ill and the aged, writes **John Young**

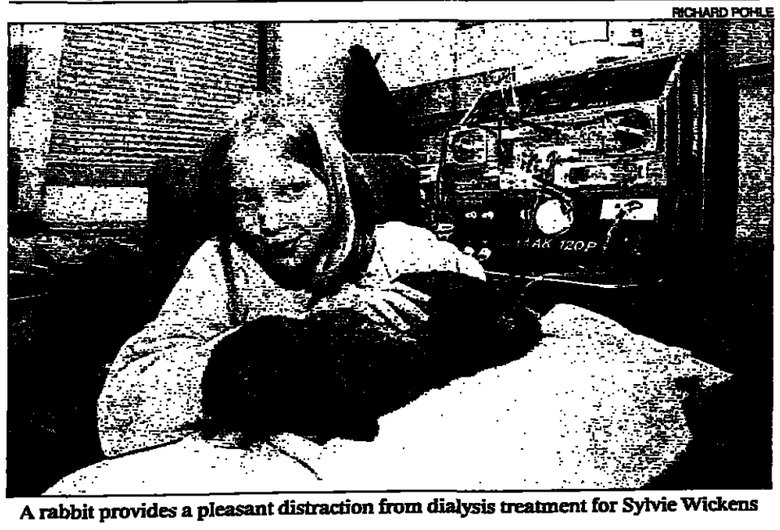
In the Timbo children's ward of Guy's Hospital, three teenagers, Michelle Anderson, 16, Gary Richards 15, and Sylvie Wickens, 14, are undergoing dialysis. They are cheerful and talkative and resigned to the fact that, until they receive a successful kidney transplant, they will have to continue making their thrice weekly visits for ever.

But what has brightened this particular afternoon for them is the arrival of four furry visitors: Tanner, a four-year-old Border collie, Willow, a rabbit, and two guinea pigs, Lala and Po. They have been brought by their owners, volunteer members of the Children in Hospital and Animal Therapy Association (Chata), who believe that animals can provide a therapy that is missing from the companionship of other humans.

These visitors provide reassurance of an ordinary world outside the hospital doors. "I love seeing them here," Gary says. "They help to pass the time." Karen Lockhart, the ward sister, is equally delighted by the visits. "They give the children something to look forward to," she says. "You can see them perk up as soon as they come in. They give them a great lift."

The visits are more than a lift and a distraction from their treatment. Sandra Stone, Chata's founder, who began visiting patients at Chase Farm six years ago, claims that animals can facilitate communication with children who are depressed. "I took one of our rabbits to a patient who was in the intensive care unit," she recalls. "No one had been able to get a response from the child. The visit by our rabbit was the only thing that prompted any reaction and provided staff with the first clues to the child's level of awareness. This enabled them to focus the treatment more effectively."

RICHARD POHLE



A rabbit provides a pleasant distraction from dialysis treatment for Sylvie Wickens

Mrs Stone worked as a children's nurse for 21 years. After retirement she took up voluntary work at an animal shelter, and began taking some of her charges into old people's homes. "It seemed to me there was some kind of natural bond between animals and people who were institutionalised," she says. If old people, why not young?

> 'The response of the children to animal encounters says it all'

Mrs Stone took her ideas to Great Ormond Street and to Chase Farm, where initial scepticism soon changed to enthusiasm. Three years ago Chata was registered as a charity dedicated to improving the quality of life of seriously sick and terminally ill children. Its members now work on a rota basis in eight London hospitals, and there are branches in Southampton, Lincolnshire and, shortly, Cambridge. Dogs and rabbits are the most popular pets, but included on one occasion at Guy's was a Bengal tiger.

Although Chata's work in hospitals is still at a pioneering stage, the benefits that animals can bring to sick humans are attested by the Society for Companion Animal Studies (Scas), a charity founded in 1979 by a group of health professionals, social workers and veterinary surgeons to increase knowledge and understanding of the relationship between humans and companion animals. Its studies have shown that the presence of animals can have significant effects in reducing blood pressure and heart disease.

Introducing pets to residential homes for the elderly has improved the morale of staff and patients. What works for adults can be equally beneficial for children. There is growing support, too, within the medical profession.

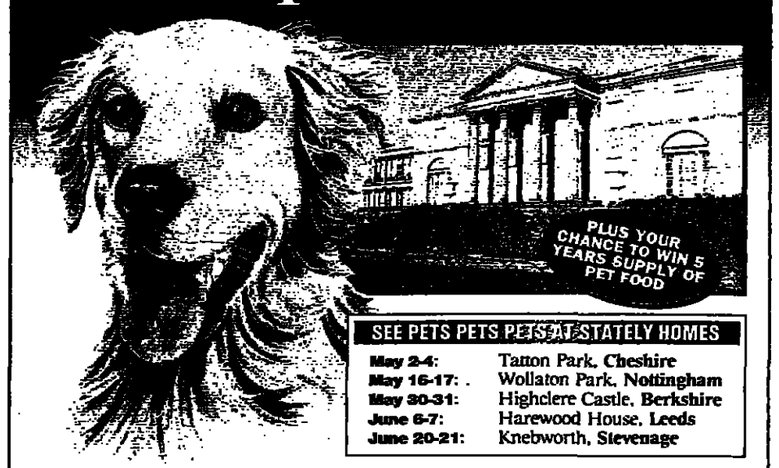
Melinda Edwards, principal clinical psychologist at Guy's and a speaker at a recent conference, was responsible for inviting Chata to work at the hospital. "Initially its programme was greeted with curiosity, but it has now become an accepted and valued service," she says. "It is widely acknowledged professionally as improving the quality of care and quality of life of sick children in hospital, offering support, nurturance and comfort. The response of the children who have benefited from their animal encounters says it all."

Other speakers at the conference were Dr Ian Pollock, consultant paediatrician at Chase Farm, and Dr Hilary Summerfield, a retired general practitioner, who jointly undertook a two-month study of the benefits of animal therapy for children, the results of which have encouraged them to launch a further year-long investigation. The pilot study was based on anecdotal evidence that during the six years that animals have been visiting Chase Farm, children undergoing ENT (ear, nose and throat) surgery have been discharged sooner than usual. Similar findings have been reported from other countries and will be the subject of a conference in Prague in September.

● *Chata needs volunteers and financial support. Send donations to Sandra Stone, 87 Longland Drive, Totteridge, London N20 8HN (0181-445 7883), who would also like to hear from volunteer pet owners with experience in medicine, education or childcare.*

THE TIMES

The ultimate event for pet lovers



SEE PETS PETS PETS AT STATELY HOMES

May 2-4:	Tatton Park, Cheshire
May 16-17:	Wollaton Park, Nottingham
May 30-31:	Highclere Castle, Berkshire
June 6-7:	Harewood House, Leeds
June 20-21:	Knebworth, Stevenage

Today *The Times* invites readers to visit Pets Pets Pets, a series of weekend shows in May and June, to be filmed live by Channel 4's *Pet Rescue*.

Times readers can purchase a family ticket for five people for only £12.50 when they book in advance by calling the hotline below. All readers quoting *The Times* will be entered into a free prize draw to win five years' supply of pet food from Burgess Supafeeds.

The Pets Pets Pets Show, in association with Sainsbury's Pet Club, will feature more than 30 live demonstrations daily.

In the 500-seater indoor theatre you can enjoy: cats behaving badly, dog make overs, rescued reptiles, advice for parrots and sniffer dogs.

The outdoor animal arena has: terrier racing, hawk and eagle flying, sheep dog demonstrations and a parade of pedigree dogs.

PETS PETS PETS SHOW

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CHANGING TIMES

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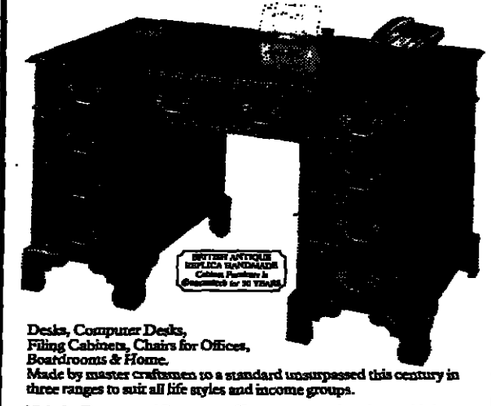
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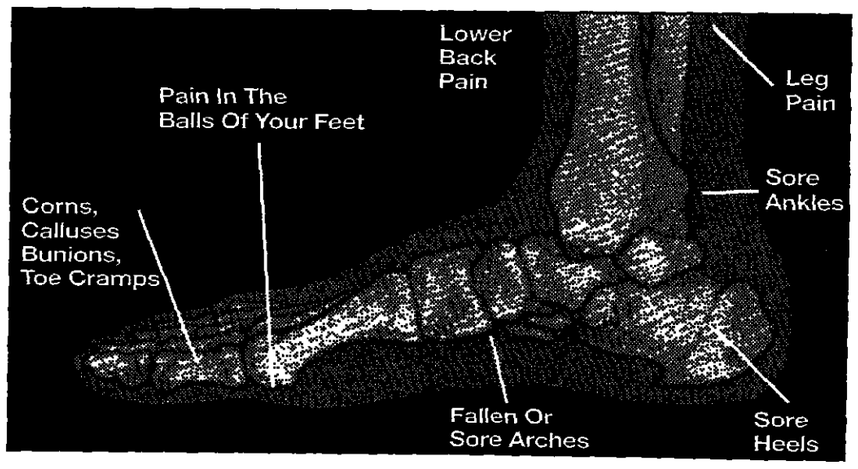
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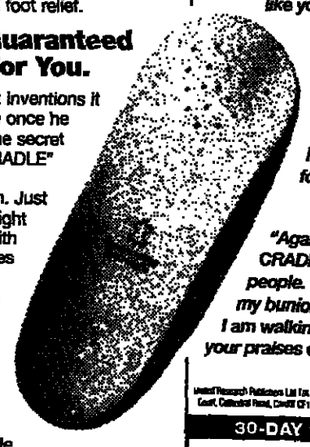
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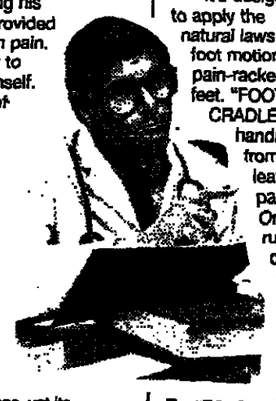
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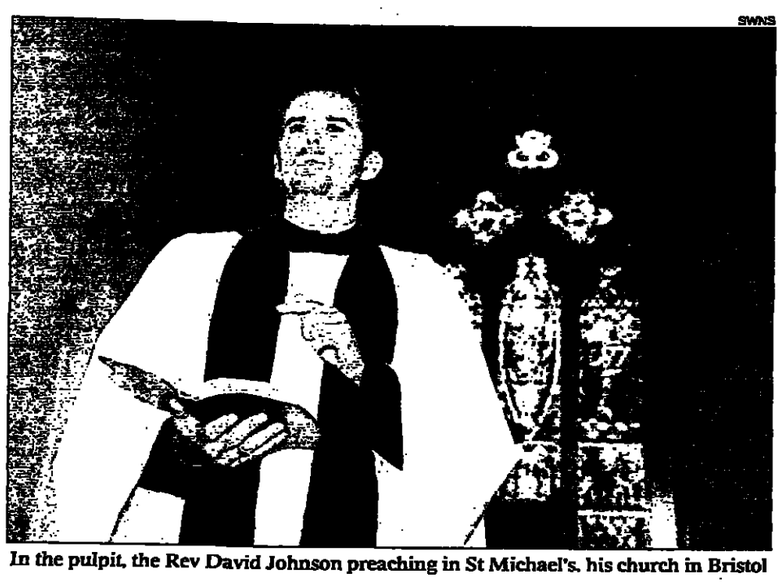
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Sun, sea, sand and sermons

Doing the Lord's work has its own rewards: like finding heaven in Jamaica

SWNS



In the pulpit, the Rev David Johnson preaching in St Michael's, his church in Bristol

SHAHINA JOHNSON



In paradise, the Rev David Johnson in Jamaica

Thirty of the preachers shortlisted in the *The Times Preacher of the Year* award have been offered free holidays in Jamaica by a Texan millionaire in acknowledgement of what they do "in the Lord's work". His only request is that they must preach a sermon while in Jamaica.

Four preachers have just returned from what they described as "two weeks in paradise" and "heaven on earth". Others will be flown out to Frenchman's Cove in Port Antonio later this year.

Grainger Weston, a grandfather in his seventies and a south Texas rancher, was inspired to fly the preachers to Frenchman's Cove, which he owns, after buying *The Times Book of Best Sermons* at Heathrow airport. The book featured the sermons of the preachers shortlisted in 1995 Preacher of the Year award, the first year of the award.

Mr Weston, the brother of Garry Weston, the chairman of Associated British Foods, is considering whether to offer the same holiday to the winners in subsequent years. His gift to each preacher included return flights for themselves and their partner, free accommodation for two weeks and £500 spending money. One preacher was so taken aback he thought the offer a hoax.

The preachers who took up the offer were the Rev David Johnson, vicar of St Michael's, Bristol; Canon Jeremy Davies, precentor at Salisbury cathedral; the Rev Stephen Knowers, vicar of St Peter's, Croydon; and Pastor Sean Carter, minister of Clipston Baptist church, Northants.

Mr Johnson said: "It was incredible. Words cannot describe how beautiful it was. We had our own private beach. When we got back I preached a sermon about heaven and paradise.

"Every day we met for breakfast and this lasted two and a half hours. We discussed every aspect of theology and church life. We talked a lot about heaven, and whether it was an exotic place like this or not. It was wonderful.

"We all thought it must be some huge joke. Only when we arrived and woke up in the morning did we finally accept it was for real. We live by faith and trust in the rest of our lives when bad things happen. So we might as well live by faith and trust when good things happen as well."

The hotel's clients included Marlon Brando, Cecil B de Mille, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. Even the Queen has stayed there. But it was forced to close after hurricane damage in 1988. Mr Weston bought it recently, and has begun a restoration project, reopening a few months ago.

When the preachers arrived in Jamaica, they found waiting for them a fax from Mr Weston: "For some reason the Lord put the prize-winning book in my hand at the London airport a year or so ago and also told me what to do with it. We all know He works in mysterious ways, so I cannot say I have any coherent idea of what should come out of your being here.

"Perhaps we will discover this in time. The only word that comes to my mind is 'preaching'. Can it be that you will all receive an inspiration to help you do better in your chosen field? An inspiration different for each. Let this trip be my way of thanking you for doing this work."

The only preacher who delivered a sermon in Jamaica was Mr Knowers, who travelled with his wife Kersti Uibo, an independent documentary film maker. She is considering a feature film on the award. Mr Knowers had made contact with the Rev Ralph Becca, rector of the 1820 Anglican church in San Antonio, who invited him to preach.

Mr Knowers, 48, who preached on the unusual invitation and on his mission as a preacher, said: "It was just brilliant, a fantastic opportunity. In my work I have met so many people from the West Indies, but have never before really understood the place they come from. This was something I would never have done otherwise, and it was completely unexpected."

Canon Davies, 52, was convinced the letter from Mr Weston was a hoax. Canon Davies, who had been entered for the award by members of his congregation without his knowledge, was also convinced that it was a hoax when he made the shortlist of 30, tearing up the congratulatory letter from *The Times*. But last night he said he now believed. "We had a wonderful time. We had profound theological conversations at breakfast. These rather disintegrated into lolling on the beach for the rest of the time.

"I had not been to Jamaica before, but now I very much want to go back. It was a great source of inspiration for the sermon I had to preach when I came back. I preached on repentance. It was an amazing place. There is a huge discrepancy between the very rich and the very poor, and the majority of people are very poor. But what was so amazing was their constant cheerfulness. It was quite extraordinary, like paradise."

RUTH GLEDHILL

● *The Times is seeking entries for the 1998 Preacher of the Year Award. Send typed sermons to Ruth Gledhill, Preacher of the Year Award, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. Enquiries 0171-782 5001. First prize is £1,000 and runners-up £250. Closing date for entries is May 1.* The Times Best Sermons for 1998 *(Cassell £9.99).*

Blackpool rock'n'roll



Ruth Gledhill has fun at the Methodist Easter celebration

A STRANGE, colourful creature called Po led us in prayer. Several equally bright colleagues, one called La-La, leapt around. We were in the Opera House, a fancy theatre house in the Winter Gardens complex in Blackpool.

The celebrated ballroom, pavilion, Spanish hall and dozens of side and balcony rooms were packed to bursting with evangelical Methodist Christians, as were large parts of Blackpool Tower nearby. In all, there were more than 13,000 Christians in town.

This was the annual Easter People, an extraordinary gathering of the Methodist church led by the Rev Rob Frost, a broadcaster on Premier Christian Radio and a Methodist minister in Raynes Park, south-west London.

I was there to sample the smorgasbord of Christian delicacies. A vast array of modern secular symbols, such as the Teletubbies, had been cleverly appropriated to further the gospel. Every room had something different, catering to every age group and Christian interest. In one room, tiny tots were asked whether they had ever met Jesus, and if so what he said to them. "I sat on Jesus's knee and he said he loved me," said one little girl. "My guinea pig died," said another. "Jesus told me he was happy in heaven."

Other events included a gospel dance show and worship with a student band called Fruit, fresh from gigs in pubs and clubs around Britain. For ordinary Blackpool citizens brave enough to venture on to the streets, there were potential encounters with volunteers from Streetwise for Jesus, an outreach mission to a town recently forsaken by the Labour Party conference.

There were mystery plays, games, meditations and seminars on everything from ageism to forgiveness and prayer. Overwhelmed by the choice, in the end I opted for a straightforward Bible study, led by Brian Dodd, director of an evangelical American organisation, Share Jesus USA. Our theme was Let God Speak. The issue, he said, was not to ask God to speak directly to us, but to uncover the meaning of what he has said in scripture.

He urged us to "let scripture pour over us" during readings from the Psalms and Romans. "God not only made creation, he made in us the ability to correspond," he said, "the ability to touch, see, hear, taste and smell, so that we can relate to God as he revealed himself in the glory of creation."

Easter People is an example of what can be done with Christianity today. With events such as this around, there can be no excuse for dullness in the pre-millennial church.

● *Rob Frost, Methodist Church, Tolverne Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8RA (0181-944 5678). Email: rob.frost.team@dial.pipex.com.*

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RUTH GLEDHILL



Children's worship at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool

'I treasure the moment that I met God on a hill'

Credo

NIGEL McCULLOCH



A friend of mine who is a monk tells me that when people engage him in conversation the subjects they most want to talk about are prayer, suffering and sex — in that order.

That prayer should be so popular does not surprise me. In my days as diocesan missioner in Norfolk I found this to be the subject which most easily opened discussions with those who described themselves as agnostics or atheists.

I still find this to be true. Here in Wakefield, as part of our "Church in Community" programme, I meet 20 different groups of people, mainly from commerce and industry. Many of them have no contact with any church, and little or no adherence to formalised Christian belief.

We reach our deepest engagement when participants say that the most important thing the church has to offer them, in their over-stressed lives, is its spiritual message of inner peace. This is said at every meeting and always wins agreement — coupled with the strongly made plea that the church should be seen to concentrate less on its internal agendas.

Future historians will find it curious that at a time when a spiritual message from Christian churches was most needed — and most wanted — so many of them seemed to turn inwards, using huge amounts of God-given talents and energies on matters of liturgy, ministry and government. Such things are not unimportant — but they should never appear to be the priority. The Church stands or falls on the quality and authenticity of its spiritual message — not the nature of its packaging.

Indeed, it is in mistaken efforts to improve their image that Christian churches can convey an unwelcome sense of manipulative and unattractive busyness — which is diametrically opposed to the inner peace of God for which so many people search.

Last year, I spent a week at St Bueno's, the Ignatian spirituality centre in North Wales. One evening, walking down the hill after watching a magnificent sunset, I felt a hand on my shoulder — gently, but firmly stopping me. I looked round, but there was no one there. Then the unseen hand pressed me to sit down and I became aware of being, in a special way, in the presence of God.

In those few unforgettable minutes I understood that I must learn to slow down and allow myself more stillness in which to know God — so that I might lead others to such stillness too.

Full of resolve, I returned to my diocese. But a year later I am not finding it easy to slow down. There are so many meetings, so many demands and so many expectations.

Thankfully, after 12 years as a bishop, my enthusiasm is not quenched; and I console myself by remembering that the literal meaning of the word enthusiasm is about being "in God". I note, too, the wryness of divine humour which led me to be born on the feast day of St Antony of Egypt — the father of monasticism. But, above all, I treasure that moment in Wales when, as it were, I met God on a hillside.

No wonder people turn to new, self-indulgent forms of spirituality if they are not led to know the treasury of Christian spirituality, tried and tested through centuries, which can meet each need and fear. No wonder, amidst their bustling agendas, that the churches seem not to convey the message of Jesus: "Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."

And yet, there can be no greater privilege, no higher priority, no more urgent task, than for every bishop and every congregation to help this searching generation to come face to face in prayer with God — and thereby to know His peace which passes all understanding.

● *Nigel McCulloch is the Bishop of Wakefield*

Church services for tomorrow

Third Sunday of Easter

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC: 11 M, Stanford in B flat, Rev T Scott; 3.15 Ch E, Exultate Justi (Viadana).

BANGOR CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 Borcol Weddi; 11 Ch M, Ireland in F; 3.15 Ch E, Wood in E flat; 5 Gosber.

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC: 11 Ch C, Locus iste (Bruckner); 3.30 Ch E.

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC: 11 Ch Euch, Blair in G; 4 Ch E, Walmisley in D minor.

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.15 Ch M; 10.30 Euch, Missa sancti Joannis de Deo (Haydn), Canon Gallilee; 4 Ch E, A: Te lucis ante terminum (Balfour Gardiner).

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8, 11 Euch, Missa in illo tempore (Montiverdi); 3.30 E.

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Ch Euch, Missa sancti Joannis de Deo (Haydn); 3.30 Ch E, Canon J Simpson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M: 11 S Euch, Schubert in G; 3.15 E, Sumsion in G, Rev P G C Brett; 5 Scouts St George's tide service, Rev M Morris.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, O salutaris hostia (Rossini), Canon R Chapman; 3 E, Stainer in B flat.

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 S Euch, Darke in F, Canon D Knight; 6 Ch E, Responses (Manners), Archdeacon of Colchester.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Euch, Runer in D; 11.30 St George's Day scout service; 3.30 E; 6.30 Healing service.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Ireland in F; 11 S Euch, Darke in A minor; 3.30 E, Gloucester service (Howells).

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 11 S Euch; 3.30 Ch E, Collegium magdalena (Leighton).

DERBY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.45 S Euch, Whitlock in G; 6 Ch E.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Canon M Kitchen; 11.15 HC; 3.30 E.

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Western wynd mass (Tye); 2 Scouts St George's tide service; 3.45 E, Stanford in C.

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Worth service (Tanner); 11.15 M, Alcock in B flat; 3 E; 6.30 ES.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.15 Euch, Mass for four voices (Byrd), Canon R Grey; 3 Festal E & Procession.

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Darke in E; 11.30 M; 3 St George's Day service; 6.30 ES, Wood in E flat.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Jackson in G; 11.30 M: Britten in C; 3.30 E, Archdeacon of Hereford.

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 Euch, Mozart in C; 4 Ch E, Sumsion in G, A: Love is come again (Paterson).

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor; 3.30 Christian Aid service, The heavens are telling (Haydn), Lord Bishop of Lichfield.

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 Euch; 3 Ch E, Canon N Vincent; 4 HC.

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 C, Rev R C Parrish; 11 S Euch, Darke in F; 12.15 HC; 3.30 E, Aston in F; 6.30 E.

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 9 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Collegium regale (Howells), Canon P Denby; 6.30 E.

NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 8 HC; 9.30 S Euch, Mass for three voices (Byrd); 6 Ch E, Wood in E.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Darke in F; 3.30 Scouts St George's Day service; 6.30 E.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 9.30 M: 10.30 Euch, Four part mass (Byrd); 3 St George's Day service; 5.30 E.

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 C, Mass of St Thomas (Thorne), Rev Dr F Stewart-Darling; 11 S Euch; 6 E.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8, 9.30 Euch, Canon M Glanville-Smith; 11.30 M, Darke in F; 12.30 Euch; 2 St George's Day service; 5.30 E, Jesus college service (Mathias).

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M; 10.30 S Euch, Canon L Virgo; 3.15 E, Salisbury service (Lloyd).

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Mozart in D, Canon D Durston; 11.30 Healing service; 3 Ch E, A: All wisdom cometh from the Lord.

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL: 9 Euch; 11 Ch Euch, Schubert in G, Canon H Cunliffe; 3 Ch E, Stanford in A.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 9.30 C; 11 S Euch, Messe solennelle (Vierne); 3.15 Scout service; 5.45 E, A: The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford).

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 S Euch, Jackson in G; 6 E, Collegium regale (Howells), Archbishop of Bodmin.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 C; 11 Sol Euch, Mass for five voices (Byrd); 6.30 Sol E, Collegium regale (Wood).

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch; 11.30 M, Stanford in B flat; 3 E, Second service (Gibbons).

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M; 11.15 Euch, Missa aeterna christi munera (Palestrina), Canon D Gray; 3 E; 5.45 Organ Recital: Michael Bawtree; 6.30 ES.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: 7, 8, 9 Mass; 10.30 Sol Mass, Poulenc in G; 12 Mass; 3.30 Sol V & B, Magnificat octavi toni (Morales); 5.30, 7 Mass.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 10 M; 11.15 S Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor; 3.30 E, Blair in B minor, Canon P Morgan.

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch, Missa festiva (Peeters); 11.30 M, Stanford in B flat; 4 E, Rev T Hart.

ST ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL, Hertfordshire: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11 M, Harwood in A flat; 12.15 HC; 3 Annual Scout service; 6.30 E.

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL, Aberdeen: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch, Darke in A minor; 6.30 Ch Festival, Stanford in C.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Denbighshire: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, A: The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley); 3.30 E.

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL, Pembrokeshire: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.30 Cymun Bendigaid; 11.15 Ch Euch, Stanford in C & F; 6 Ch E, Wood in D, The Dean.

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 S Euch, Ireland in C, Canon M Mingins; 11.30 Ch C, Mozart in D; 3.30 Ch E.

ST FIN BARRE'S CATHEDRAL, Cork: 8 Euch; 11.15 Ch Euch, Mathias in C; 7 Easter service.

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8, 10 HC, Leighton in D; 11.30 MS; 6 Anna Poole; 8 ES, Rev D K Robertson.

ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11 HC, Agnus Dei (Leighton), Rev R Frazer; 6 ES.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Mozart in C; 3.30 Ch E, Dyson in D.

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 8.30 Euch; 11.15 M, Stanford in B flat, Rev R S P Richey; 3.15 Ch E, Noble in B minor; 4.20 Organ recital: David Leigh.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Stanford in B flat; 11.30 S Euch, A: Ava Maria (Rachmaninov); 3.15 E, St Mark's service (Near); 5 Organ recital: Peter Heginbotham; 6 ES.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy, Kievan and traditional polyphony, Met Anthony.

ALL SAINTS, W1: 8 LM; 10.20 MP; 11 HM; 5.15 LM; 6 E & B, Stanford in B flat.

ALL SOULS, W1: 8, 9.30, 11.30 C, Rev R Tice; 6.30 EP, Dr J Stott.

THE ASSUMPTION, W1: 11, Locus iste (Bruckner).

BLOOMSBURY CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, WC2: 11, 6.30 Sunday worship, Rev B Hibbert.

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children's service; 11 M, Rev Dr P Elvy; 12.15 HC; 6 E.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, WC2: 11.15, 6.30 HC, Rev S Hood.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30 LM; 11 HM, Missa secunda (Hassler); 12.30 LM; 4.15 Mass; 6.15 LM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, SW7: 9 HC; 11 MS, Rev N Gumbel; 5, 7.30 Informal Service.

HOLY TRINITY, Sloane Street: 8.45 Euch; 11 S Euch, Darke in F, Bishop M Marshall.

THE ORATORY, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, Messe des paques (Goumod); 12.30 Mass; 3.30 V & B, Surgens Jesus (Philips); 4.30, 7 Mass.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirian.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 MS, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

ST ANNE AND ST AGNES (Lutheran), Gresham St, EC2: 11 Ch Euch, Rev P D Schmicge; 7 Jazz Vespers.

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, EC1: 9 HC; 11 M, Noble in B minor; 6.30 Ch E, A: Christus resurgens (Lassus).

ST BRIDE'S, EC4: 11 Ch Euch, Stanford in G, Canon J Oates; 6.30 Ch E.

ST CLEMENT DANES, WC2: 11 Aircrew Association Annual service, Stanford in B flat, Rev V Cooper.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, SW1: 11 HC, Rev W A Cairns; 3 HC; 6.30.

ST GEORGE'S, W1: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Darke in F.

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 S Euch, John Paul.

ST JAMES'S, Sussex Gardens: 10.30 S Euch, Missa paschali (Lassus), Rev B Wilson; 6 Ch E, Second service (Tomkins).

ST JOHN'S, E15: 11 Family service, Rev D Richards; 6.30 HC, Rev M Okello.

ST LUKE'S, SW3: 8 HC; 10 S Euch; 12.15 HC; 6.30 E, Rev J Streeting.

ST MARK'S, NW1: 8 HC; 10.30 Euch, Mozart in B flat, Ven K Gibbons.

ST MARGARET'S, SW1: 11 S Euch, Missa pro victoria (Victoria), Rev Dr P Bradshaw.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch, Rev M Johnson; 11.30 Visitors Service; 2.45 Chinese Service; 5 Ch E; 6.30 ES.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, W8: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 Ch M; 12.30 HC, Rev F Gelli; 6.30 E.

ST MARY'S, SW1: 9, 10 LM; 11 HM, Missa le bien que j'ai (Goudimel), Father N Mercer; 6 Sol E & B.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, NW3: 10.30 Euch, Mozart in D.

ST MARYLEBONE, NW1: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Missa brevis (Grayston Ives), Rev J Caldwell.

ST PAUL'S, SW1: 8, 9 ,HC; 11 Sol Euch, Stanford in B flat, Canon N Henvisides.

ST PETER'S, SW1: 8.15 HC; 10 Family Euch; 11 S Euch, Missa cantate (Sheppard).

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Rise heart thy Lord is risen (Vaughan Williams), Canon A S Craig.

CHAPEL ROYAL, Hampton Court Palace: 8.30 HC; 11 M, Short service (Byrd); 3.30 E, Sumsion in G.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley St, W1: 11 S Euch, Missa brevis (Berkeley).

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 M, Rev Dr W Brierly; 12.30 HC.

GRAY'S INN CHAPEL, WC1: 11.15 S Euch, Messa di Gloria (Puccini).

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, EC4: 8.30, 11.15 HC, Mass for four voices (Byrd).

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 M, Haec dies (Wood), Band of the Grenadier Guards; 12 HC.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, SE10: 4 Ch E, A: O Lord the maker of all things (Joubert), Rev R Nurton.

● *Compiled by Deborah King*

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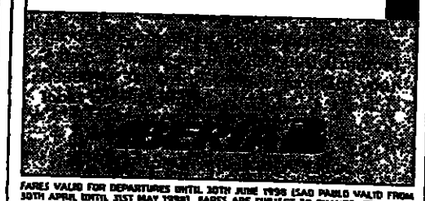
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Inside Disney's animal park

Florida · 24

THE TIMES TRAVEL

The sexy cities that are all booked up

Bulletin board · 28



Partying with the gods took on new meaning for **Jeremy Seal** when he joined in the Naag Panchami festivities in Shirala, India



Members of a snake club pose proudly before the festival begins



JEREMY SEAL

A venomous cobra rears up alongside a ruler. Its owner has provoked it in the hope that the hooded reptile will beat the record of two feet off the ground

In search of the big hood

BEWARE the local hoods. No, this is not advice for visitors to free-market, theft-frenzied Moscow nor 1930s Chicago, but to a dusty, nondescript Indian town nestling in the foothills of the Western Ghat mountains, called Shirala. All around me, women are sprinkling holy turmeric powder, flower petals and rice grains upon the magnificent hooded heads of highly venomous cobras.

Nowhere in India is the annual summer (July/August) festival of Naag Panchami (*naag* means cobra) celebrated more spectacularly than here, far from the tourist trail, 100 miles northeast of Goa in Maharashtra. What might elsewhere constitute the ultimate nightmare is no less than partying with the gods for the people of Shirala.

It is estimated that at least 10,000 Indians die annually from snakebites, but cobras have been revered there since pre-history. In Shirala, where the feeling for these snakes has always been particularly strong, killing cobras is a significant taboo. Farmers who mistakenly kill them under ploughs seek forgiveness by digging special graves for the snakes which they deck out with offerings of flowers, rice, milk and honey.

"We love our cobras," explains Mr Gumbhar, headmaster at Shirala's school. "God Shiva is always entwined in cobras, and we remember how the world itself is balanced upon the hood of the great snake god. Our women worship them as fertility deities, controlling everything from the onset of the monsoon rains to childbirth."

Reviled reptiles elsewhere in the world might give their back fangs for such status, but Shirala's cobras have a gruelling schedule. The men of the town, who come together as snake-collecting "clubs" with names such as the Lions Club of Shirala and the Snake King Trinity Club in the weeks leading up to the festival, dig them out of holes in the fields.

Being taken from house to house and worshipped is just the beginning of the snakes' Naag Panchami commitments. They also have to take part in competitions to see how high they can rear; display themselves during the festival parade and at the town temple; and pose while uncertain festival-goers are urged by camera-wielding friends to get into the picture. All the while, being liberally covered — along with the rest of us — with gulal, a lurid purple powder that is India's festival confetti.

Since major Indian festivals such as Holi (February/March), Dussehra (September/October) and Diwali (October/November) regularly attract millions of pilgrims, it is no surprise that Naag Panchami brings at least 100,000 visitors to Shirala, an extraordinary influx for a town which does not have a hotel (having left everything to the last minute, I ended up sleeping in an onion store).

There are hundreds of saffron-coloured sadhus (holy men), a travelling fair complete with rickety, lime-green ferris wheels and merry-go-rounds, and endless lines of stalls selling coconuts, balloons, trinkets and samosas. Every business in the town — tractor-part suppliers, electrical stores and wood mills — reinvents itself for the festival as a lucrative "studio" where visitors flock to be pictured with harmless rat snakes draped round their shoulders (even in Shirala, love of cobras is tempered with a certain common sense).

On the day before the festival, I accompany the Snake King Trinity Club members, chanting "Hurrah for the cobra" in the local Marathi language, as they head for the competition ground among fields on the edge of town, carrying their cobras in clay pots wrapped in bright orange and maroon kerchiefs. Here, the clubs compete by provoking their cobras to rear as high from the ground as possible. As one man stands before the snake, using the pot as red rag and protective shield combined, another man stands a six foot ruler alongside the rearing reptile, and measurements are taken. The top of the winning cobra's head stands two feet off the ground.

On the morning of the festival, cobra pots are borne along on a sea of shoulders that jostle for space with trombones, tubas and trumpets. There are bands everywhere; the bandsmen of The Durbar Brass Extravaganza are dressed like Michael Jackson in gold braid and peaked caps made from silver foil. They serenade the cobras to the Hindu temple where crowds queue to throw coins and turmeric at the reptilian gods, and to break auspicious coconuts at the shrine of Shiva's wife, known locally as Ambabai.

In the afternoon, the clubs take to tractor-pulled trailers festooned in coconuts and banana leaves for the official parade. By now, the streets are packed with visitors. Onlookers cling to every roof and balcony. The Young Stars Club have invited me onto their trailer. "I was taught to handle cobras as a child," explains Vinod, the Young Stars's leading handler, as he supports a cobra on his arm. "Some people call us snake charmers, but we are not like those people. We handle cobras for pleasure, not for money, and we never remove their fangs nor sew up their mouths." As the crush of the crowd becomes perilous, worried parents hand their children up to us for what — despite our proximity to some very active cobras — is apparently considered safekeeping.

By the next day, the crowds have disappeared. The temporary photo studios have been dismantled and tractor parts are on sale again. In the evening, the clubs load their tractors with cobra pots and drive out into the fields to release them. Purple-stained cobras stream from the opened pots to disappear among the crops for some well-earned rest.

On Naag Panchami, I was taking a breather in my onion store when there was a knock on the door. The two men who walked in blithely emptied a cobra upon my jumble of dirty laundry and mosquito repellents. When I didn't have any turmeric to sprinkle upon its head (I only had onions, plenty of them), they shrugged, packed up their cobra, accepted a few rupees for their trouble and were gone. After a few days in Shirala, I too could only shrug.

● *Jeremy Seal is writing a book on deadly snakes. It will be published by Picador next year.*

DATES FOR DEVOTEES A ROUND-UP OF INDIAN FESTIVALS AND FAIRS



JEREMY SEAL

Cobra pots paraded during Naag Panchami, one of India's most colourful festivals

A RECORD number of Britons are visiting festivals in India this year. *Tom Chesshyre writes.*

Popularity has soared mainly because of the Kumbh Mela festival, currently taking place in Haridwar in Uttar Pradesh. It is rated as the world's biggest religious festival and is expected to attract at least four million devotees, many of whom bathe in the Ganges.

Kumbh Mela takes place every three years, consecutively at Allahabad, Nasik, Ujjain and Haridwar. There are precise dates for the most auspicious time to take a dip in the Ganges in Haridwar this year: the next one is tomorrow, then on Wednesday and then May 14. Celebrations last until August. After Kumbh Mela, the most popular Indian festivals among British travellers are the Great Elephant March in Kerala and the Camel Fair in Pushkar. A spokesman for the Indian Tourist Board said: "We must have had 10,000 inquiries about festivals this year."

Other festivals: Car Festival in Puri (Orissa), June 26; Snake Boat Races in Alappuzha (Kerala), August 8; *Dussehra in Mysore (Karnataka),* September 30 to October 1; Festival of the Gods in Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), September 30 to October 1; Camel Fair in Pushkar (Rajasthan), November 11-14; Christmas in Goa; the Great Elephant March (Kerala), January 9-12, 1999.



FACT FILE

■ This year's Naag Panchami festival takes place on July 28.

■ Getting there: Jeremy Seal flew to Bombay with Air India (01753 684828), which has return flights from Heathrow to Bombay in July from £503.

■ Leading India specialists Cox & Kings (0171-873 5000) tailor-make itineraries to include visits to specific Indian festivals.

■ Where to stay: There is no tourist accommodation in *Shirala. Visitors are advised* to stay in the nearby city of Sangli, where adequate accommodation and excellent food are available at the Hotel Sadanand (0091 233 322911) — double rooms with en-suite bathrooms from £7.

■ Sangli is ten hours by daily train service from Bombay. *Shirala is about one hour* from Sangli by regular bus. A taxi to Shirala from Sangli costs only £10.

■ Weather: Shirala can be very wet in July and August, but is unlikely to be too hot.

■ Medical requirements: Typhoid and hepatitis A vaccinations. Anti-malarial tablets also recommended. Consult your GP.

■ Visa requirements: Visas cost £19, available from India House, Aldwych, London (0171-836 8484).

■ Reading: *India* (Lonely Planet, £15.99), useful information on festivals. *India* (Rough Guides, £14.99), excellent general guide.

■ Further information: The Indian Tourist Office (0171-437 3677) has details of festivals.

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How Disney moved Africa to Florida



The Animal Kingdom is expected to be swamped with visitors this summer



This is the closest that many Americans will ever get to an authentic safari experience – with rhinos, hippos and lions roaming ersatz savanna

What is it like inside the new Animal Kingdom? David Churchill gives his verdict

Disney's newest and biggest theme park, the £1.5 billion Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World in Florida, opened on Wednesday. David Churchill, the first British journalist into the park, explains how to make the most of a visit.

Is it a zoo, safari park or something else?
Disney hates people calling it a zoo and is not too happy about "safari park" either. It uses the twee "a new species of theme park" to describe the place, but it would be fair to say that elements of a zoo, safari park and traditional theme park can all be found at the Animal Kingdom.

Can you be more specific?
There are reputed to be more than 1,000 animals, representing more than 200 species, included in the 500-acre park, and some of the animals (the gorillas, for example) are in habitats that look like a modern zoo. But the safari park experience is an amazing representation of an African savanna — far removed from the sort of safari parks we are used to in the UK.

What do you mean?
The safari area is 100 acres of landscaped savanna which, at ground level, is designed so that you feel you are in the heart of Africa, rather than the theme park capital, Orlando. It is virtually impossible to tell that the animals are kept apart by moats and other means.

What about the animals?
You view the animals (giraffes, elephants, lions, hippos, etc) during the 20-minute Kilimanjaro Safari, a ride in a safari truck which jerks about as though you are passing over rough country (although this is simulated by springs and pistons). The driver tells a story through a loudspeaker about an imaginary overhead airplane keeping track of big game on the move and the threat from poachers. Towards the end there is a supposed chase involving your safari vehicle, and the poachers are captured.

Does this work?
Not really. Most people just want to see the animals in a realistic setting and are bemused by the attempt to make a drama out of the ride.

Can you see many animals?
It depends on what time you go. Although Disney has tried to position the animal habitats in such a way as to ensure maximum exposure, the animals (from zoos or other safari parks) follow their own agenda. This means that at certain times of the day you can go round the park and see very few major animals. The best time to go is early morning — the Animal Kingdom is already opening at 7am (and closing at dusk) and may open at 6am in summer.

If I've been on a real African safari, what would I think?
You would probably hate this attraction because, however cleverly it is done, it is still a simulation of the real thing.

Are the animals happy?
This is a big issue for Disney as it has faced strong criticism from animal rights groups. Much of the money spent on the park is for animal welfare facilities, and Disney has recruited most of the top animal and conservation specialists in the US to act as advisers. Most observers believe that the facilities are among the best to be found anywhere for animals in captivity — but that does not hide the fact that Disney is still exploiting the animals for commercial gain.

Haven't some animals been killed?
Disney confirmed this week that two cranes had been killed by its safari trucks, and several other animals, including cheetah cubs, hippos and rhinos, have died since being brought to the park last September. Disney says that these were all unfortunate accidents which also happen elsewhere in zoos and safari parks.

How does Disney defend its use of animals?
First, it believes that seeing animals in a near-natural habitat may encourage Americans, in particular, to become more aware of the animal world and endangered species. Secondly, Disney is spending many millions on conservation and environmental projects outside the park, as well as on special conservation attractions inside it. The Conservation Station — reached by the Wildlife Express train to ration numbers entering — enables visitors to "go behind the scenes" and watch vets, researchers and keepers at work. There are also video cameras to view the animals in their quarters.



Disney animals prowl the park as well as the real thing

What else does the park offer?
While the Kilimanjaro Safari is the main lure at present — an Asian area opens next year, themed with forests and jungle — the park has two other key attractions. The Tree of Life is the centrepiece icon. It has some 325 animals carved into its artificial trunk — including, so it is rumoured, a few unofficial Disney characters. Inside the Tree is a 3D film theatre showing *It's Tough to be a Bug!* — a film aimed at giving the insect point of view. The theatre has special effects — such as water and hot air being sprayed over the audience — although at just eight minutes long it is about half the length of the *Honey I Shrunk the Audience* 3D at EPCOT. It may be faster-paced than *Honey*, but it is rather too short if you have queued for an hour or so.

And the other key attractions?
DinoLand USA — don't laugh, but this is the name Disney finally came up with for its dinosaur attraction. The themed area is based on a bizarre story of students on an archaeological dig playing games after hours. This is in an attempt to give a theme to the Countdown to Extinction ride, the only thrill ride in the Animal Kingdom. You board a moving vehicle which trundles along a track, using aircraft-simulator technology to bounce you around as you are (accidentally) sent back into the past to save the last dinosaur from extinction by a giant meteor. It uses cutting-edge technology, similar to the Indiana Jones ride at Disneyland in California. Again the ride is far too short and the storyline confusing (although this is being reworked).

What else?
There is a circular ride on the Discovery River which tries (and fails) to be an updated version of the Jungle Cruise at the Magic Kingdom. There is an excellent stage show based on *The Lion King* and another, featuring real animals, with a *Pocahontas* theme. For children, there is a character-greeting area.

What will the queues be like?
When Disney last opened a theme park in the US — the Disney-MGM Studios in 1989 — the park was swamped with visitors. It is likely to be the same with the Animal Kingdom this summer. The best advice is to go early and be prepared to wait, although by autumn the park will probably have settled down to more regular attendance figures. If you are lucky, you can probably get to see the three major attractions — Kilimanjaro Safari, Countdown to Extinction and *It's Tough to be a Bug!* — within one morning. But I suspect that many people will find that the lush greenery and a pace slower than at other theme parks will make them want to spend more time just enjoying the scenery.

What about eating?
There's nothing exceptional and what there is tends to be more expensive than most British visitors are used to paying. Just outside the entrance to the park is a Rainforest Café, similar to the one in central London. It serves the usual themed burgers, chips and fish steaks. This is not owned or operated by Disney (the food is better) but it is still expensive.

Overall, is it worth a visit?
Yes. You may have reservations about exploiting animals, but the park is traditional Disney — everything is extremely well done and the attention to detail is impressive. There may not be a lot to see at present in comparison with other theme parks, both Disney and non-Disney, but what you get is top-notch. The cost of entry will now be included in the multi-day passes that Disney sells — from four to seven days — although the Keith Prowse ticket agency in the UK has a nine-day pass at £205 for an adult and £164 for a child. A one-day pass to the Animal Kingdom costs about £30 for an adult and £25 for children aged three to nine.

● *Disney information in the US: 001 407 824 4321. In the UK: 0990 300605. Keith Prowse: 01232 232425.*

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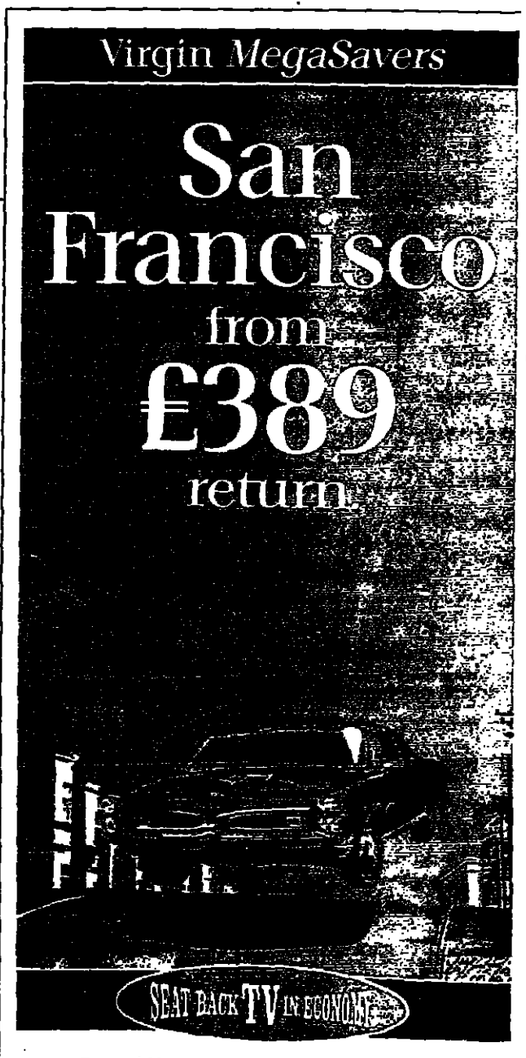
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Why bracing Portland fits the bill

Paul Mansfield enjoys the laid-back way of life in Orgeon's City of Roses

I knew I was getting into the Portland spirit at the 24-Hour Church of Elvis. This "performance art experience" took place in a store-room crammed with Elvis memorabilia.

You had to sit on the back seat of an old Cadillac and push yourself around on castors, listening to a manic commentary by the curator, Stephanie Pierce, author of *Healing Through Glitter*. At the end, she asked if anyone would care to take advantage of the Church's wedding ceremonies. "They're cheap, but not legal."

So far, so wacky. But — and this is the point — less than half an hour before I'd been wandering through a Japanese garden, high above the city in Washington Park. There were giant redwoods, rock gardens, pools of koi carp, and ornamental lakes.

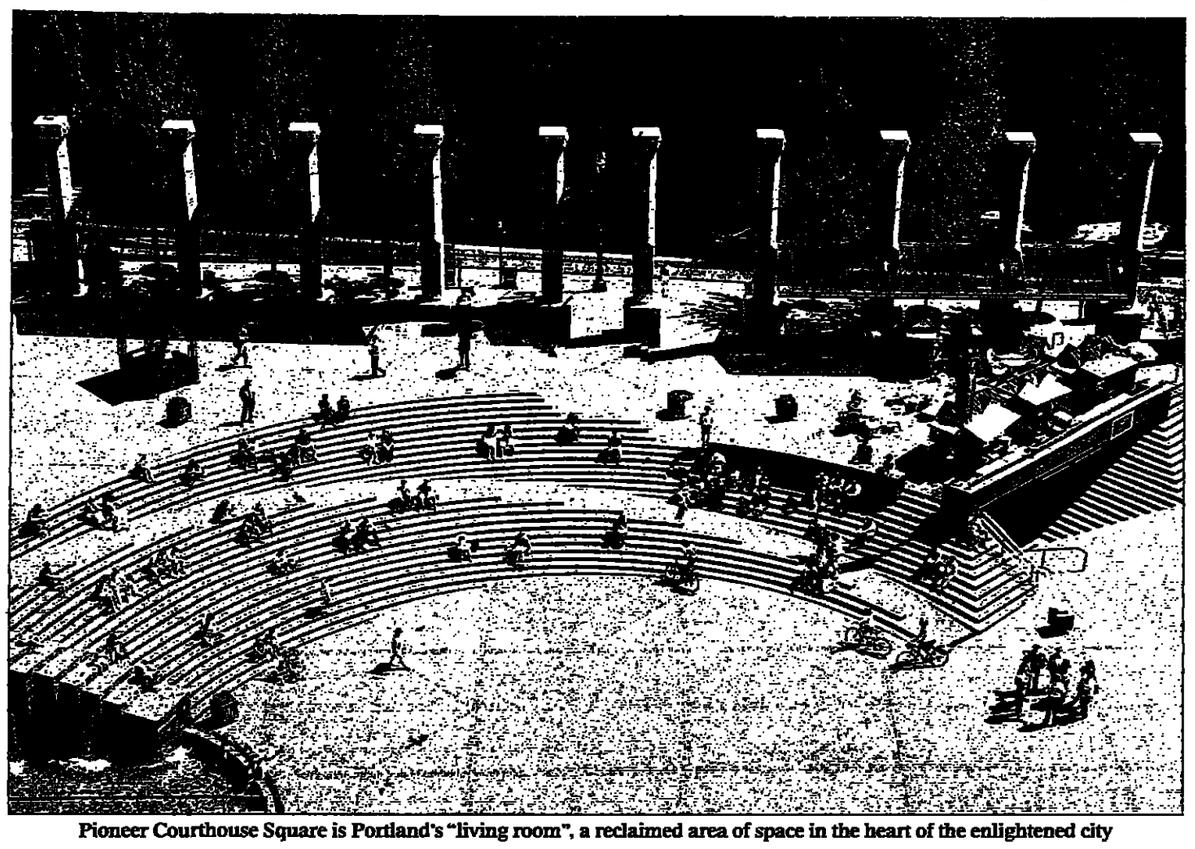
Moving from Zen-like calm to urban weirdness by way of a five-minute taxi ride was a good illustration of two of Portland's most striking characteristics: its compactness, and its diversity.

The "City of Roses" lies on the Willamette River, surrounded by the forests and volcanoes of the Pacific north-west. Its population is more than 1.5 million, but it feels much smaller. And the backdrop of spectacular scenery — in particular, the snow-capped cone of Mt Hood rising 50 miles to the east — gives it a rugged, down-to-earth feel. A dozen bridges span the Willamette, which is now bordered by a waterfront which used to be a freeway until the locals decided to rip it out in the Seventies.

To call Portland enlightened in civic matters is an understatement. One per cent of all new building costs go towards "public art": the murals, statues and restorations that give downtown Portland its vibrant character.

The MAX (Metropolitan Area Express) light railway ferries passengers around cheaply and eco-soundly. There are pedestrianised areas, leafy gardens, and a notable absence of gridlocked traffic.

More than that, Portland is funky. Not in a self-conscious way, but as a reflection of how the locals choose to live. In Pioneer Courthouse Square (Portland's living room), an open space has been reclaimed in the heart of the city with shops, cafés and benches catering to office workers.



Pioneer Courthouse Square is Portland's "living room", a reclaimed area of space in the heart of the enlightened city

At noon, the "weather machine" — a large tubular construction with various bits sticking off it — comes to life with a trumpet fanfare, and a display of symbols depicting the forecast for Portland's notoriously changeable climate. "If you don't like the weather," the locals like to say, "wait for ten minutes."

One thing you notice about Portlanders is that they talk to each other. "Sure is hot today," said a woman in a security guard's uniform as we crossed the road together. "Look at that," said a bearded guy, as we watched an elderly driver negotiate a tight turn in his gigantic RV (recreational vehicle). "Hell on wheels, man."

I had lunch at an outside table at a Greek deli on SW Washington Street, where the *souvlakia* (lamb kebabs) was superb and the waiters wore T-shirts bearing the slogan "Powered by Ouzo". Just opposite, a van stopped at traffic lights. The young driver whipped out a pair of drumsticks and tattoed a rhythmn on the steering wheel, relieving tension with a flourish. Very Portland.

The city divides neatly into geographical zones. Southwest contains the Portland Art Museum and the Center for the Performing Arts, home to the Portland Opera (slogan: "Anything but stuffy".) Northwest is famous for its bijou architecture, microbreweries (Portland has some of the best in the US), coffee houses and galleries. Northwest's main thoroughfare, NW 23rd street, is referred to ironically by some locals as "Trendy-third".

And, like all US cities, Portland also has its rough edges. In the old Pearl district I walked past bail bond stores and crossed the street to avoid one or two glassy-eyed stumblers.

But even the low-rent areas have consolations. On W Burnside St is the biggest bookstore in the USA — Powell's City of Books, with over a million volumes. Powell's has a nicely human feel. Guides show you around, there's a good café, and plenty of armchairs for relaxing in while you browse through a few books from those packed along the towering shelves.

Time to look up old friends John and Chloë, who moved to Portland a few years ago, and have never looked back. John — who describes himself as a "latent American" — drove us across the river and out to the Hawthorne district.

SE Hawthorne Boulevard on a Friday night was a beguiling mixture of gentrification and radicalism. There was the usual array of neon-lit bars and restaurants, but with an edge.



The 24-Hour Church of Elvis

A young guy was collecting signatures on a "Legalise Marijuana" petition; an African busker with flowing robes and a drum whirled around the street; live music blasted from clubs; there were even a few crusties.

We made a pit stop at the Bagdad, a cinema which doubles as a restaurant. You buy your beer and pizza and take it into the auditorium, where the seats are equipped with low tables — an excellent idea.

Dinner was a toss-up: American, Caribbean, Moroccan or with-your-fingers Ethiopian? We settled for Mexican at Chez José, surrounded by amiable Portlanders. Outside, a stream of people passed down the Boulevard until way after midnight.

Portland is a bracing mixture — vital without being precious, laid-back without being starry-eyed. John mentioned the oft-quoted comparison between Portland and another city of the Pacific Rim.

"People say this could be another Seattle," John said. "But we don't want it to be another Seattle. It is much more interesting as it is." Too right.



CHILLING OUT IN...

PORTLAND

■ **Getting there:** Paul Mansfield travelled with United Airlines (0845-844 4777) and United Vacations (0181-313 0999).

United Airlines has return flights to Portland International Airport via San Francisco from Heathrow from £600 until June 11; after June 11, ticket prices will rise to £703.

United Vacations fly-drives cost from £586 per person. This is for two people travelling together in May or October and includes flights, airport taxes and an economy two-door car.

■ **Do Not Disturb:** The Heathman Hotel (001 503 241 4100), 1001, SW Broadway — luxurious historic hotel next to the Center for the Performing Arts, nightly jazz, excellent restaurant draws the theatre crowd. Reservations can be made in the UK through Small Luxury Hotels (0800 964470), a double (room-only) is from £100 in May.

The Benson Hotel, 309, SW Broadway (001 503 228 2000), from £75 a double.

McMenamins Kennedy School (503 249 3983), 5736 NE 33rd Street — is a former school that's been converted into an extraordinary hotel with its own cinema, a restaurant, bar, live music in the evenings and an outdoor heated Jacuzzi/pool. Double rooms (B&B) cost from £60, with free cinema tickets.

All prices based on double occupancy.

■ **Bites and breathers:** Micropubs: Rock Bottom, 206 SW Morrison, for White Pelican American Pale ale, wooden booths, good food, pool tables. The Hawthorne Street Ale House, 3632 SE Hawthorne, has exceptional food. Greek Cuisina Downtown, excellent menu for between £7-£10. Zefiro's, 500 NW 21st Avenue, chic and airy; Pacific Rim cuisine, outstanding Oregon wines. Chez José, 2200 NE Broadway, inexpensive Mexican food (£9).

■ **Culture:** The Performing Arts Centre (503 248 4335) has four separate theatres; The Portland Art Museum (503 226 2811) and the Oregon Historical Society Museum (503 222 1741). Powell's City of Books (503 228 4651) and Borders (503 220 5911) are two of many excellent bookstores.

■ **Vantage Points:** Pioneer Courthouse Square has good food-stalls and laid-back atmosphere. Saturday Market, Burnside and Ankeny, the largest open-air craft market in the US.

■ **Weird and wonderful:** The Portland Building — "the world's first post-modern office building", adorned by *Portlandia* — the second largest copper statue in the US (after the *Statue of Liberty*). The 24-hour Church of Elvis (503 226 3671), 720 SW Ankeny. The Rose Garden at Washington Park (free entry).

■ **Getting around:** Tri-Met buses (503 238 7433) and the MAX light railway are free within the 300-block downtown area. Powell's Travel Bookshop (503 228 1108) in Pioneer Courthouse Square has free maps marked with walking tours.

■ **Guidebooks:** *Oregon Handbook* (Moon, £11.95); *Pacific Northwest USA* (Lonely Planet, £12.95); *Citysmart Portland* (Group West, £9.10, available in US); *Portland Laughter* (Valentine, £3.65, available US), murder mystery set in Portland; *Dharma Girl* (Group West, £7.30, available US), novel about a Portland girl.

■ **Further information:** The Portland Oregon Visitors Association (503 222 2223). *The Oregonian* (widely available local newspaper) has a weekly listings magazine, the *A&E*, on Fridays. See also *The Rocket*, *Just Out* (gay) and *Willamette Weekly*.



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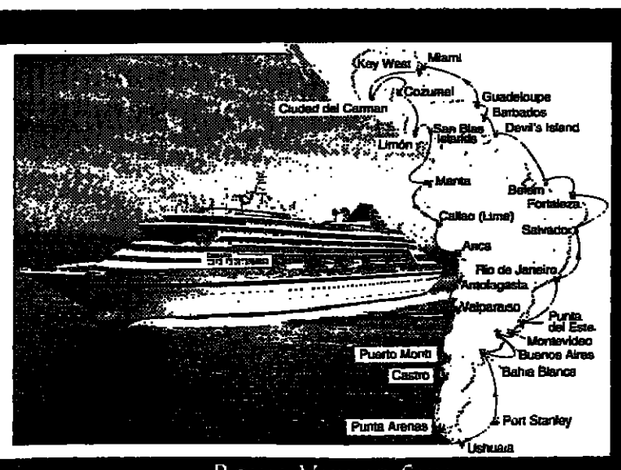
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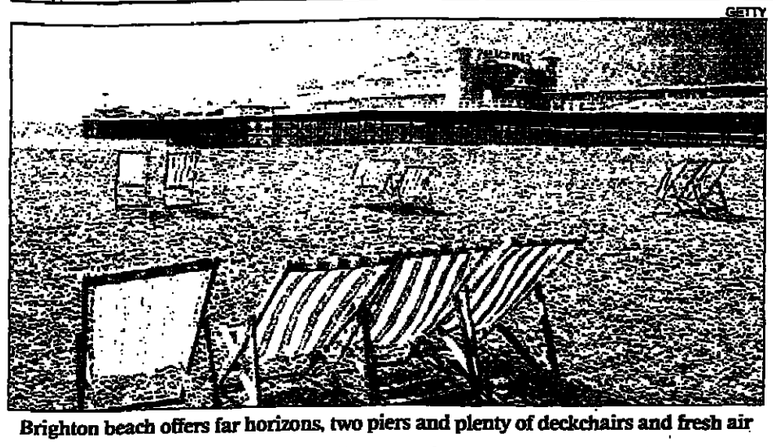


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EUROPE'S CULTURAL FESTIVALS 98

GETTY



Brighton beach offers far horizons, two piers and plenty of deckchairs and fresh air

End of the pier show with extra street cred

Angus Clarke enjoys the razzmatazz of Brighton – especially at Festival time

The first thing you notice when you step off the train at Brighton is the air. It is fresh. It zings. This is not surprising — the last land it blew over was the Bahamas. This air has a come-hitherish note. You follow it out of the station — a glorious, soaring Victorian iron railway temple now entombed in scaffolding — and down to the sea which glitters and dimples at the end of the road.

As you stroll down the hill in this air, your soul inflates. Goodbye office, strip lighting, dull cares, narrow skies — you have come to have fun and boy, have you come to the right place. Especially if you have come in May during the annual arts festival, which this year runs from May 2 to 24.

Like more than four million visitors every year, you start with the Palace Pier. Admission is free. You walk out past the Indian palmist, golf, go-karts, shooting gallery and rides onto the ocean. Through the gaps in the deck the green sea heaves. At the end, whipped by the wind and blasted by competing junk music from the fairground rides, you look back at England and feel you are almost in another country — especially because Temporary Tattoos ("also nose and body piercing") is surrounded by French teenagers loudly arguing about which bits of themselves to make holes in.

Seen from the sea, the town has a pleasant low-rise façade, ravaged but not destroyed by 1960s planners. It flows into the handsome Regency façades of Hove which are white, grey, cream or pink, depending on the fall of the light. The physical union of Brighton and Hove was recently consummated by the merging of their two town councils. In terms of appropriateness it was like taking an elderly aunt to a thrash metal gig, but Hove is not without its charms — it is said to be the largest conurbation in Britain still without a McDonald's.

Across the waves, a mile to the west of the Palace Pier, stands the padlocked, salt-bitten desolation of the West Pier (Brighton is unique in Britain in having two piers). You can take a cautious tour of the ruin. They give you a red life-jacket in case you fall through the rotting deck and a yellow hard hat in case a dead pigeon falls on your head.

Even in its present dilapidation you can see why it was — is — the only Grade I listed pier in Britain. The exquisite filigrees and lacy arabesques of the old ironwork glimmer through the rust and guano. It is a world away from the oikish, lumpen Palace Pier: faded grace beside booming tat — it is a very Brighton kind of contrast.

After 20 years of hand-wringing, the West Pier has just been reprieved from oblivion with a £14 million lottery grant and pledges of private capital. A lesser but still elegant refurbishment is being applied to the beachfront promenade without losing the present-sitting-on-the-past's-lap feel of the place. So beside the charming little Fishing Museum (a whole boat, bits of fishy old technology, old film and photographs documenting a vanished, fiercely moustachioed marine past) stands the legendary Zap, club of clubs, still rocking (coming soon are DJs Carl Cox, Sven Vath, Jeff Mills et al), but still true to its 1970s origins ("Wednesdays: chopper choones. Seventies disco-theque and flared-out punk; tequila £1 all night, free sweetie bag on arrival").

> It's where street culture sharpens its cheekbones

The apotheosis of all this contrast is the Royal Pavilion. This wonderful Regency-Victorian cocktail of neo-Mogul, crypto-chinois, pseudo-Indian psycho-active motifs was the world's first pre-post-modern building. Like a restaurant bill, it has the strange quality of appearing simultaneously smaller and larger than you expected. *Holiday Which?* voted it "the best-value heritage attraction in Britain", but don't let that put you off because inside it is even more impressive. Don't miss the banqueting room candelabrum. Kids are always fascinated by the cast-iron palm-trees in the Pantagruelian kitchen. This, and the sea air, may turn the visitor's thoughts to food.

Conveniently, Brighton boasts more restaurants and pubs per citizen than anywhere else in Britain, so it is a question of name the cuisine, you can eat it here. If the weather is kind, it is hard to beat fish and chips on the seafront, which has the bonus that you can irritate the entire beach by throwing a single surplus chip into the air. This will miraculously attract every seagull between Chelmsford and Cherbourg into a vast aerial screaming match. They will have the knotted handkerchief off your head as well, if you are not careful.

Having done culture and food, it is time to forsake the seafront and its seductive scent of coconut oil, coffee and cannabis, for shopping. Wander inland along the narrow pastel-coloured streets, squeeze past the crowds, around the buskers and the flocks of language school students, to the Lanes. A tangle of tight alleys left over from a dim historic era, the Lanes mainly consist of second-hand jewellery shops — good for romantic window-shopping. The unlucky in love should opt for the melancholy romance of the solitary walk by the sounding sea.

Inland from the Lanes you come to the small streets of the North Laine area. Somewhere on the way you leave tourist Brighton and enter the real town where next season's street culture is already sharpening its cheekbones. Even the really old people (ie over 35) look youthful and not all the same. The shops are almost as interesting as the shoppers. Here you can buy presents for the whole family, from architectural salvage and eth-nick-knacks to funky-retro accessories and curiously shaped and strapped leatherwear ("don't even ask, darling"). Sunny Saturday mornings are the best: the open-air market heaves; buskers, pavement artists and cafés sprawl across the traffic-free streets and you can practise your signature on petitions to save the world.

Here, too, you begin to see the effects of having two universities and a highly rated art college, plus a swarm of musicians, Aquarian eccentrics ("smell that patchouli oil, dear"), artists, media shovers and makers, eco-warriors, actors, impresarios, entrepreneurs, alternative healers and designers living in a town where it is not daring to be different. You get lots of avant without the garde.

But, snappy enough at the best of times, the streets really crackle and pop during the arts festival, which is England's largest and a refreshingly demotic carnival of culture. If the Tokyo String Quartet playing Schnittke or Daniel Börtz's opera *Marie Antoinette* performed in Swedish and French are not your idea of a fun evening, there is a frenzy of street theatre, exhibitions, circus, live music and — very Brighton this — artists' open houses.

Despite so much cultural amphetamine, visitors usually find that the sea air makes them sleepy (this, no doubt, is why Brighton used to have a certain saucy reputation for subverting its guests' morals) — but when the sun sets everybody comes out to play. The chattering classes grab a cosy sofa at the Sussex Arts Club, while the young and the brave take their eardrums underground.

There are clubs to suit most tastes (some quite brazen, apparently) and while the night-time streets have just as much electricity as London or Barcelona they lack that big-city menace. Even the police, squeezed by the dozen into mini-vans on West Street on weekend evenings, are relaxed enough to chat with the passing crowd. And when, in the small hours, you spill out of a seafront thunder dome there is the moonlight on the waves to soothe your ringing brains.

ANDREW HASSON



Opening parade at the Arts Festival in Brighton which benefits from having two universities and a highly rated art college on the doorstep

SEASIDE RENDEZVOUS BRIGHTON FESTIVAL FACTS



On top of it all

■ The Brighton Festival: From May 2 to 24 offering theatre, opera, literature, music, dance, circus, fireworks, parades, exhibitions (including *A Surreal Life: Edward James 1907-84*; information from Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, 290900), comedy, guided walks, markets. There are 21 events specially commissioned for the festival, plus 31 world premieres and 11 UK premieres including dance — *Mikrokosmos* (choreographed by Belgium's Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker); music — Daniel Börtz's opera *Marie Antoinette* performed by the Swedish Folkopera and theatre — the Sichuan People's Art Theatre with *Sailing Through the Three Gorges* (Chinese with English surtitles).

■ The Streets of Brighton is a programme of street theatre events from May 7-10, all free. Information from Zap Productions (321588). More than 100 artists will open their houses to the public, including the Fiveways Group (information from Colin Ruffell, 550010). Festival brochures (292961), information (from May 2) on 706771; box office 709709; *http://www.brighton-festival.org.uk* has listings and links to umbrella event Web sites.

■ Further information: Brighton Tourist Information Centre (292599). The Brighton & Hove Web site at *http://www.brighton.co.uk* has hotels, tide tables, pubs with microbreweries, gay nights at clubs etc.

■ Getting there and getting around: Regular trains from London (0345 484950), Gatwick airport (01293 535353), 35 mins from Brighton by train or car. Shoreham airport (296900) for light planes/helicopters is five miles away. National Express Coaches (0990 808080). Newhaven ferry port (364056), is nine miles away, rail and bus links to Brighton. Easiest transport in town: feet/cycle, bus (886200) or taxis.

■ What to do: West Pier tour (321499) costs £10 (no children under 16). Royal Pavilion (adults £4.50, children £2.75), Brighton Museum & Art Gallery (free: good eclectic collections). Booth Museum (free: endearing natural history): details of all on 290900. Monthly local listings in *The Latest* (818150: *http://www.thelatest.co.uk*) and *Impact Monthly* (321612). Guidebooks from tourist information centre, Bartholomew Square.

■ Affordable cafés/restaurants: Havana (773388) and Browns (323501) are laid-back; Cybar (384280) and Surfers@Paradise (684184) are friendly and online; Zafferelli's (206662) — Spanish-run Italian for lunchtime *moules*; English's (327980) for seafood; The Black Chapati (699011) for post-modern Indian; Terre à Terre (729051) — knock-your-socks-off vegetarian, also Food for Friends (202310). Sussex Arts Club (727371); Zap Club (202407).

● *The telephone code is 01273 unless otherwise stated.*

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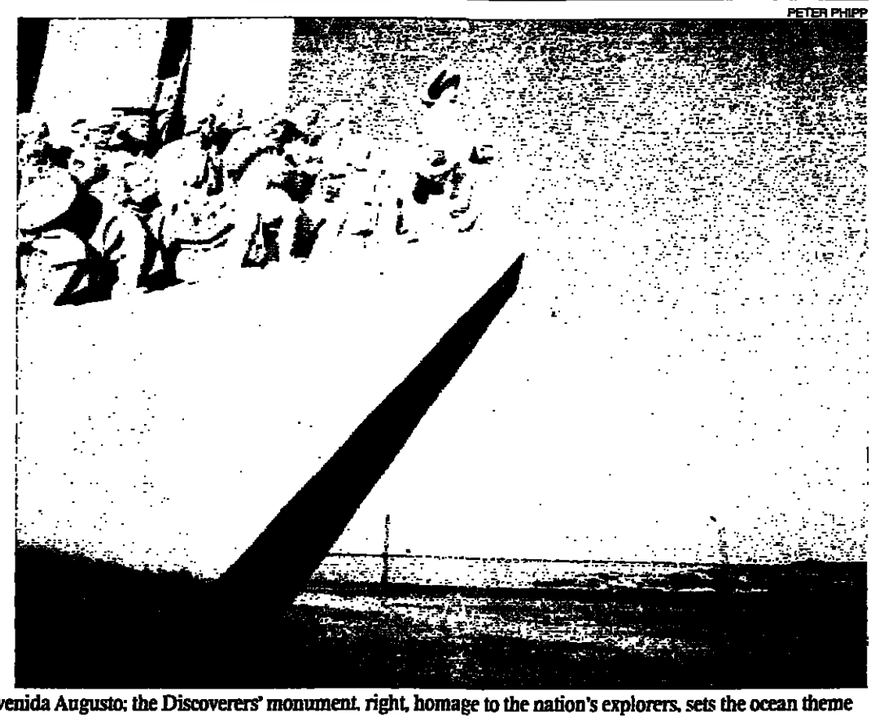
EUROPE'S CULTURAL FESTIVALS 98

The far-fetched pavilions

Lisbon's Expo 98 promises to be one of the biggest shows on earth, says Martin Symington



PETER PHIPP



Cultural divide: a young musician plays, watched by visitors to Lisbon's Avenida Augusto; the Discoverers' monument, right, homage to the nation's explorers, sets the ocean theme

An exhibition site outside Lisbon is hoping to offer attractions to rival the World Cup and bring millions of visitors to the city this summer.

Upwards of eight million people are expected at Expo 98, the last global exposition of the century, to be held on a 150-acre site on the Tagus estuary a few miles upstream from the city centre. It will be one of the biggest shows the world has seen, and quite a party.

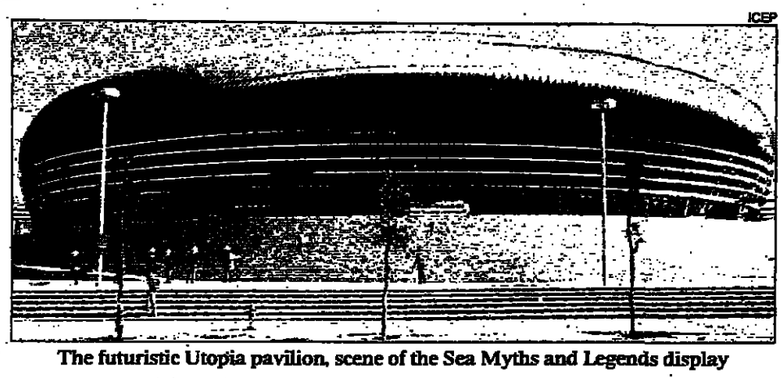
Expo 98 opens on May 22, with 145 nations strutting their stuff at individual pavilions themed on "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future". The concept of a World Exposition has evolved since Albert, the Prince Consort, organised the first one at Crystal Palace in 1851. His idea was to bring people together from all over the globe to celebrate the astonishing inventions of the industrial revolution. More than six million people flocked to the great iron and glass Crystal Palace in Hyde Park (which was later moved to South London and eventually burnt down).

Since then, sporadic Expos have been staged across the industrialised world, as massive trade fairs for nations and multinational corporations to demonstrate their technical prowess.

Joao Paulo Velez, spokesman for this year's Expo, says the Portuguese effort will be "nothing like a trade fair. Instead it is all about creating awareness around a theme strong enough to stimulate worldwide concern."

This translates as a temporary theme park with a strand of serious purpose, around which countries can wave their national flags.

ICEP



The futuristic Utopia pavilion, scene of the Sea Myths and Legends display

WORLD



A tram makes its way through Lisbon's old streets

The displays are housed in several pavilions, most of which are run by individual countries. Portugal's, understandably enough, is based on the "Golden Age of Discoveries". This year is the 500th anniversary of the discovery by Vasco da Gama of the sea route to India. We are promised, according to Senhor Velez, "an exhibition of how Portugal takes from the past this spirit of modernity ... how Vasco da Gama prefigured the Internet 500 years ago by making communication possible between East and West."

If this seems a little far-fetched, try Germany's pavilion for a virtual reality dive — in a vibrating seat — to a submarine station 100 metres below sea level. Or Saudi Arabia's, where you will be invited to sit, like a desert island cartoon character, on sand under a palm tree by an oasis — this is designed to make you reflect on life in a place where water is scarce.

Then cool down in Finland's pavilion, where the conditions of an arctic winter are recreated, complete with a sheet of ice for the floor. In the searing heat of a Lisbon summer, this promises to be a popular spot.

"Cool Britannia" will be on display, with a spiral, moving walkway on which visitors will rise through an underwater seascape, while a multimedia system of holograms bombards them with "Oceans of Innovation", a series of displays highlighting British marine history. All very "new Labour" and likely to give Tony Blair a warm glow when he, John Prescott and the Prince of Wales visit on June 28 — Britain's designated national day for the exposition. (Ironically, the British theme was devised under the Conservatives, who, for some reason, decided not to share John Major's vision of village cricket and pubs serving warm beer with the world.)

Venezuela's pavilion has an audio-visual journey up the Orinoco and China's will have a 360-degree video screen. Intriguingly, there will also be Equatorial Guinean, Kyrgyzstani and North Korean pavilions, though none from Iraq or Libya. Also absent are Indonesia, which has fallen out with Portugal over East Timor, a former Portuguese colony; and, curiously, Australia, which is apparently afraid of upsetting Indonesia's President Suharto by appearing to be friendly with Portugal.

Expo 98's centrepiece is a giant "Oceanarium", the largest in Europe, standing at the edge of the Tagus like a tall ship at anchor, with steel masts and sails of glass. Inside, a series of coastal habitats from a Pacific atoll to the stormy shores of the Azores are being pieced together, soon to be filled with 15,000 specimens of marine fauna and flora. There is also an elliptical "Utopia" building which will stage a "Sea Myths and Legends" show, and a "Pavilion of the Future" promising an audio-visual journey from the universe's outer limits to the bottom of the ocean.

A touch more prosaically, there is also an outdoor video stadium with a 100 square metre screen on which World Cup football will be shown live. "Without this, perhaps eight million people would stay away," said Senhor Velez. As well as the football, after dark there will be non-stop entertainment such as discos, fashion shows and pop concerts.

One certain celebrity appearance is that of Bill Gates, head of Microsoft, who has chosen Expo 98 as the venue to announce "something new" to the world on September 9.

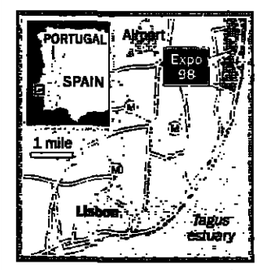
For the moment, however, helicopters hover overhead, and cranes and diggers are still at work. There are roofs, roads and ornamental lakes to be finished. "We are on schedule," Senhor Velez assures me, perhaps conscious that lack of punctuality is as Portuguese a tradition as grilling sardines. And will there be life on the site after Expo 98? "Yes," he says. "Lisbon will never be the same again. Expo Urbe will be a futuristic new district, a suburb for the 21st century."

So, even if you miss Expo 98, there should be plenty of good reasons to visit Lisbon in the next millennium.

EXPO 98 FACT FILE

■ Martin Symington flew with TAP Air Portugal (0171-828 0262) which has return fares from Heathrow to Lisbon from £155.40 until July 16 and throughout September. Two people must travel together, and three days' car hire is included. From July 17 to August 31, fares are from £324.40, car hire not included.

■ When is it? Expo 98 runs from May 22 until September 30. Gates open daily at 10am. The permanent attractions close at 8pm; the nightlife goes on till 3am.



■ Ticket prices: £15 for one day and £26.50 for three days. Night entrance only is £6.

■ Packages: Caravela Tours (0171-630 9223) has two nights' B&B at a three-star Lisbon hotel from £259, including one-day Expo ticket and flights. Kirker Holidays (0171-231 3333) has three nights' B&B at a two-star hotel from £325, including transfers, flights and a one-day ticket. Unicorn Holidays (01582 834400) has three nights' B&B at a five-star hotel from £456, including flights and one-day ticket.

■ Transport: A new metro links central Lisbon with Expo '98. Trains from Estoril, Cascais and Porto go to the gates.

■ Further information: the Portuguese National Tourist Office, 22-25a Sackville Street, London W1X 1DE (0171-494 1441).

■ Web site: http://www.expo98.pt

WEBWORLD: LISBON EXPO 98



WHERE DO I START?
http://www.expo98.pt is the official homepage of Expo 98, with a guide to ticket prices, a virtual map of the site and an A-Z guide to cover queries. Details of the British pavilion are discussed at *http://www.nexus-pt.com/news/stories/expopav.htm* A good starting point for Portugal as a whole is at *http://s700.uminho.pt/homepage-pt.html*

MUGGING UP
At *http://cgi1.geocities.com/Paris/4118/exp98up.htm* find details of pavilions, events and Portugal's sea history. For a teutonically dry but absorbing look into expo architecture since Crystal Palace's construction in 1851, visit *http://www.expo2000.de/englisch/geschichte/einleitung2.html*

For those interested in Expo memorabilia, *http://www.the-forum.com/collect/pgwf.htm* has front covers of original programmes.

THE BEST DEAL
http://www.eurotels.com has details of ten good hotels of three stars or more in Lisbon, including six with icons directing you to their sites.

Budget travellers, book a dorm spot early at *http://www.ipgc.demon.co.uk/british-hostels/index.htm* for £12 per person.

Those with deeper wallets can book a two-night Expo package at the Hotel Meridien from £230 per person (excluding flights) online at *http://www.portugalvirtual.t/lodging/costadelisboa/lisbon/meridien.lisboa/expo98.html*

TRAVELLER'S TALES
Stressing that it is not a dating agency, the website at *http://www.travelmate-uk.com/travelmate/travelmate/* is a bulletin board for those wanting a travel partner.

At *http://www.tototours.com/98capt.htm*, there's a men-only gay tour to Portugal offered, including a trip around Expo 98.

SUSANNAH JOWITT

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TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

Passport delays due to new fees

TRAVELLERS face delays in obtaining passports following a rush to beat price increases which came into force this month. *Steve Keenan writes.*

Applications are now taking between six and ten days to process, compared to four days last year. Anne Scovell, the Passport Office policy manager, said the timescale was still within targets laid down by the office. But she admitted: "It is higher than in the same period last year."

The Office increased the price of a standard ten-year passport by £3 to £21. Personal applications also now cost £10. With sterling at a nine-year high and Thomson, Britain's biggest tour operator, reporting summer sales up by 17 per cent, a record number of passports are expected to be issued.

In the year to March 31, 1998, the office issued 4.89 million, marginally below the record level of 5.1 million in 1996/97 when one-year visitor passports were scrapped.

The figures will be boosted further when the office issues 500,000 new child passports.

From October 5, parents will not be able to add any child under 16 to their own passports. This move is designed to improve security and make child abductions more difficult. Those already on a passport will be exempted until the passport expires or the child reaches 16, when their own passport becomes compulsory.

It will cost £11 for five-year passports for children, the same price as it now costs to add a child to an adult's passport.

Holiday firms keep watch on troubled Indonesia

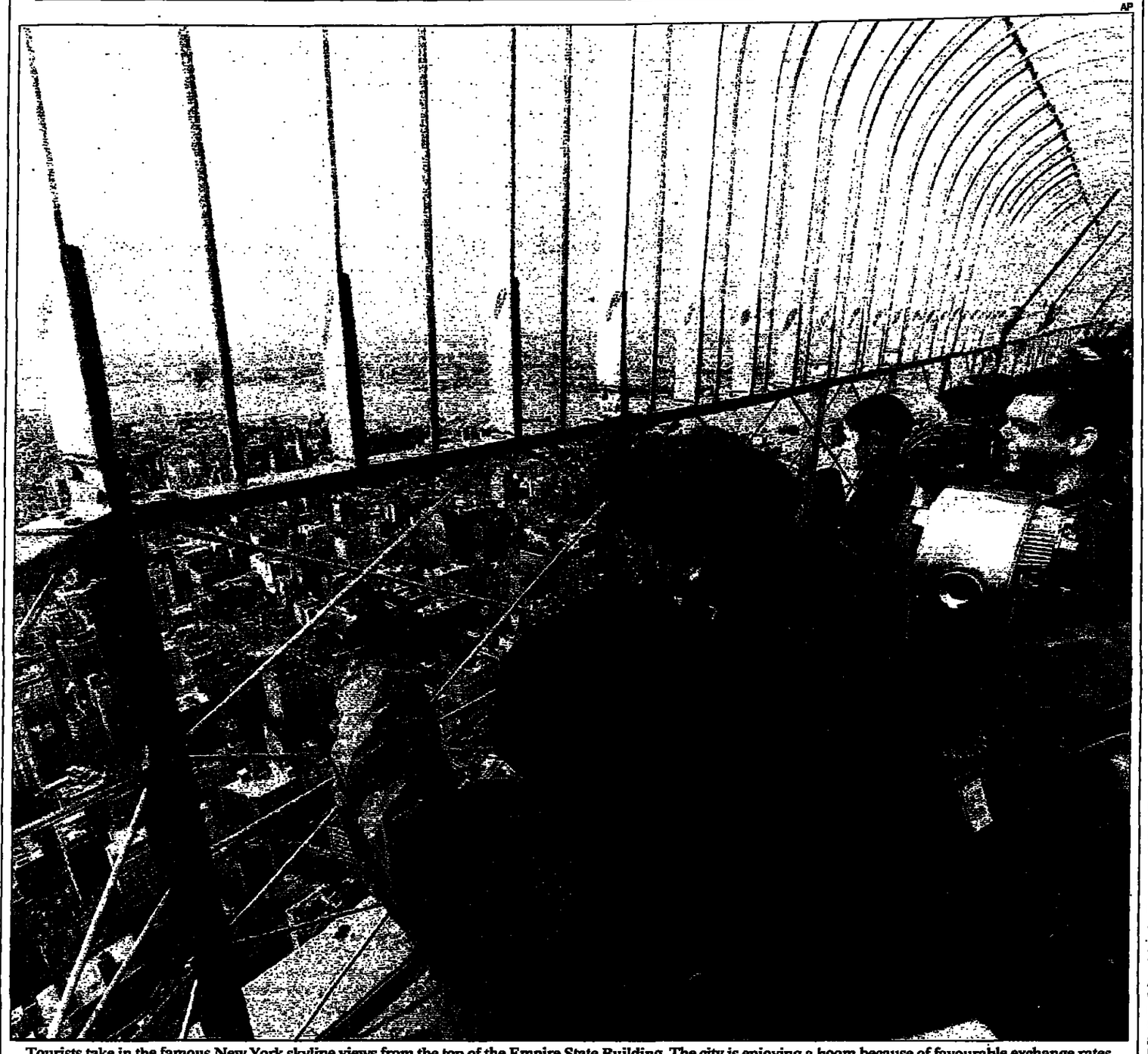
BRITISH holiday firms are monitoring events in Indonesia, following the spread of student unrest to the island of Bali this week.

Nine students and three policemen were injured on Thursday at a rally, in mounting protests against the 32-year rule of President Suharto. Stones were thrown at security forces who responded with tear gas and canes.

A senior Thomas Cook manager was on the island last night and reassuring holidaymakers in resorts. A spokeswoman said: "No tourist areas are involved so far but we are looking at the situation to see if it develops further."

Foreign Office officials are also in touch with consular staff following the mass rally at Udayana University in the island's capital, Denpasar. A spokesman said: "It is something we take seriously but will wait to see the Ambassador's comments before deciding whether to offer new advice to travellers."

Book early for breaks in New York, Amsterdam and Venice, says **Jeannette Hyde**



AP

Tourists take in the famous New York skyline views from the top of the Empire State Building. The city is enjoying a boom because of favourable exchange rates

The great hotel room hunt

Tour operators are warning that tourists face difficulties finding hotel rooms in Amsterdam, Venice and New York this spring and summer. The three cities are experiencing a boom year, boosted by favourable exchange rates and a shortage of accommodation.

The UK's largest travel agent, Lunn Poly, reports that there is no availability for packages to New York for the next two months. They have sold well due to the strength of the pound against the dollar.

Tour operator Amsterdam Travel Service is finding the city so full that it has added short breaks to Stockholm and Copenhagen to its latest brochure.

Travellers should book a break in Amsterdam as far ahead as possible, as a series of major conferences and events, plus a flood of new, cheap flights from the UK, means the city is more popular than ever. August 1-8, when Amsterdam hosts the Gay Games — the sporting event held every four years — will be a particularly hard time to find a room, warns the Netherlands Board of Tourism. Richard Ashton of Amsterdam Travel Service's parent company, the Bridge Travel Group, said: "For Amsterdam, you need to book three months in advance to get exactly what you want."

In Venice, even the previously low season months of November, December and March are proving busy, and rooms are hard to find unless you book ahead.

Ted Wake, sales director of city break specialist Kirker Holidays, said: "The strength of the pound and the dollar means that British and US tourists are flooding to Venice. Also, there are now more than 3,000 lire to the pound. A year ago you got 20 per cent fewer lire for your pound.

"But the trouble with Venice is that when it gets popular you cannot just build a couple more hotels, because of space," he said.

City break operator Cresta recommends tourists book now to secure rooms in New York between September and December, the busy shopping period. And many operators are trying to persuade travellers to book more unusual short breaks.

British Airways Holidays recommends Cracow, Istanbul or Jerusalem as alternatives to booked-up cities.

Many operators still have space in the UK's number one short break destination, Paris, this June and July — partly because of the World Cup.

Richard Ashton said: "We still have places. Some people want to be near the World Cup and some do not."

TRAVELLER'S TIP

REDUCE the two pages of personal details on the new-style passport, using a photocopier, to the size of a credit card. Laminate this, and you have a card giving official and personal details, together with your photograph — useful, for example, if you lose your passport, or at border crossings in remote places.

It costs £2-£3 at a photocopy shop but can save much more in terms of time and worry. — *Patricia Fortune, Billericay.*

● *Send your suggestion, in no more than 75 words, on a postcard to: Travellers' Tip, The Times Travel Desk, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN, with your address and day-time telephone number. If yours is published, you will win the Lonely Planet guidebook and phrasebook of your choice.*



Sun, sea, sand – and a war zone



TRIP WIRES

by Cath Urquhart

TRAVEL EDITOR

Holidays with a military theme are all the rage these days. Global Exchange, a Californian outfit, is taking hordes of West Coast human rights activists on trips to former combat zones including Northern Ireland (a tour highlight is Long Kesh prison), the Gaza Strip and Haiti. In Britain, we take a more sober approach to such matters — several companies specialise in tours of battlefields, with Boer War sites increasingly popular as we head towards next year's centenary.

However, some travellers set off hoping for a week of culture, fun and sun, only to find their holiday taking an unexpectedly warlike turn. I am thinking of Yemen, where so many foreigners are captured these days that I fully expect a "hostage experience" to become part of tour operators' programmes.

Last weekend, David Mitchell, an English teacher with the British Council, and his wife and son were kidnapped on their way to Sanaa airport. A British operator, Jasmin Tours, takes a handful of adventurous tourists to Yemen each year and says such events do not deter its clients. "In fact, some of our customers ask if they can get kidnapped," said Katy Leiper, Jasmin's product manager.

"Although we wouldn't want to get involved in that," she added quickly.

Last year 34 hostages were captured in Yemen in 13 separate incidents. They were held in good conditions for several weeks while their captors, who are tribal people, made demands on the Government and then released them unharmed.

One, Giorgio Bonanomi, an Italian tourist, was taken hostage for five days and later said that it had been the best part of his trip. "Too bad it's not possible to organise holidays like this, because it was fantastic," was his verdict. Fingers crossed that the Mitchells are safe and feel the same way.

HEARTY congratulations to the Tenerife police, who this week jailed an Austrian tourist for 24 hours for putting towels on four sunbeds at dawn. People who bag sunbeds are almost as irritating as those who bag tables in self-service restaurants while their friends queue for food. I predict a huge rise in the number of British visitors to this delightful island.

LAST weekend I stayed at The Landmark Hotel in Marylebone, central London, one of the last great railway hotels, built nearly a century ago. As I had no luggage, no one took me to my room for that vital demonstration — how the lights work.

Why do some hotels choose wiring systems that are incomprehensible to anyone without a degree in applied physics? My bedside light only worked with the entrance hall light on. Lamps went off when you hit the wall switch. My room overlooked the atrium, where palm trees reach for a soaring glass roof. Anyone dining there last Friday could be forgiven, upon looking up, for thinking the disco had moved to Room 217.

MY PLEA last week for someone to relieve me of a fish barbecuing implement did not go unheard. Trudi Burford from Broadstairs, Kent, is this week's winner, having written me a heartfelt letter about catering for vegetarian visitors. Meanwhile my helium-filled balloon, a bribe from Airtours, still waves above my desk. Airtours is keen to shake off its cheap and cheerful image. With balloons of this quality, that will not take long.

FLYING OFF THE SHELF

IN THE second of our monthly round-ups, we search out the best guidebooks to help you deal with red tape, eco-friendly travel and finding the best B&B.

New Zealand: The Rough Guide (Rough Guides, £12.99). This long-awaited guidebook carries practical information on "tramping" (hiking) as well as on Maori and European history. The publishers have finally stopped printing on what seemed to be one step up from toilet paper, and now use both high-quality paper and striking colour pictures.



World Wise: Your Passport to Safer Travel by Mark Hodson and The Suzy Lamplugh Trust (Thomas Cook Publishing, £6.99). Aimed at younger travellers but relevant to everyone, *World Wise* offers useful advice, from pre-planning to safety and culture shock. For example, a sick-of-sexual-harassment female traveller in Egypt says: "A local woman told me to hold my hand to my face and flick it away dismissively. I never got hassled badly again." The directory at the back provides information on more than 200 countries as diverse as Indonesia ("never pass or accept anything with your left hand") to Monaco. This is not a substitute for individual guidebooks, but invaluable when preparing for your trip.

Asia Overland: A Route Planning Guide by Mark Elliott and Wil Klass (Trailblazer Publications, £12.95) is thin on obvious tourist attractions but has more than 450 hand-drawn maps covering 32 countries, plus essential information such as how to say "I am not Russian" in Mongolian. This is for the seriously independent traveller — taking the soft sleeper rail carriages in China is dismissed as "an unnecessary luxury" — and the advice has a strong personal feel to it. One ploy for dealing with awkward officialdom is to pretend



the officer is offering advice: "We thanked him, shook him warmly by the hand and walked off."

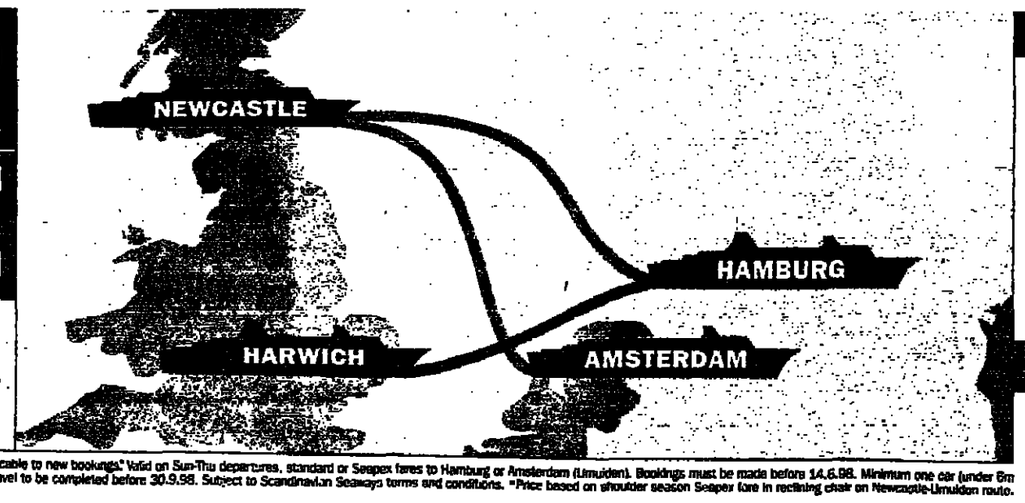
Green Volunteers: The World Guide to Voluntary Work in Nature Conservation edited by Fabio Ausenda (WorldView Publishing, £9.99) lists more than 100 projects and organisations, with details of location, travel, languages spoken and cost of living.

The Good Bed and Breakfast Guide by Elsie Dillard and Susan Causin (Penguin, £14.99). Updated for 1998, *Which? Books* continues its anonymous inspections of accommodation around the UK. More than 1,000 B&Bs are chosen for atmosphere, cleanliness, value for money and location.

JOANNA HUNTER

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TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

TRAVEL TIPS by Jill Crawshaw



TRAVEL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Have a row in Venice

ON Sunday May 17, more than 1,000 rowing boats of all shapes and sizes will take part in the 30-kilometre race among the lagoons in the Vogalonga Regatta in Venice. Any boat with oars will do — previous competitors have included Oxford and Cambridge and Hong Kong's Dragon Boat crews, as well as a team of German grandfathers in a canoe.

Inaugurated in 1974, the regatta has become so successful that 50 rowing clubs have sprung up in Venice. Lakes and Mountains Holidays (01329 844405) offers three-night B&B breaks from £398 (including flights), based at the Hotel Boston, close to St Mark's Basin, where the race starts after competitors *sing hymns to San Marco* and Venice.

GET OUT the flares, miniskirts and hot pants from the back of the wardrobe for P&O's "Swinging Sixties Cruise" on the *Arcadia*, departing Southampton on July 18. The golden age of British pop will be represented by Ricky Valance (*Tell Her I Love Her*), teen idol Jess Conrad and the early 1970s band Mungo Jerry. *Juke Box Jury*-style shows, quizzes and reviews pile on the nostalgia. Ports of call include Ciudadela in Minorca, Cannes, Livorno, Malaga and Tangier. The 13-night cruise costs from £1,545-£2,248. Swingers past and present should call P&O Cruises (0171-800 2222).



Ricky Valance, pop idol of the early Sixties

Ukraine time

NEW TOURS this summer organised by New Millennium AirTours (0121-711 2232) explore Ukraine, the third largest former Soviet state and one of the four original republics that formed the USSR in 1922.

Among the highlights: Kiev with its stunning St Sophia's Cathedral, the Lavra, a vast monastic complex above the Dnipro River, Carpathian mountain villages specialising in embroidery and local art, and the bazaars, church and chapels of L'vov, the City of Lions. The 14-night tours, which start in Warsaw and finish in Krakow, cost £489-£529 for flights from Heathrow, B&B and coach travel.

Pints of song

ABOUT 175 pubs outside Dublin are listed in a free *Irish Pubs of Distinction* brochure, some offering bed and breakfast and meals, many of them traditional "singing pubs". One of the oldest, The Mills Inn at Ballyvourne, Co Clare, has its own motor museum and ruined castle, and provides free bicycles for visitors to explore the countryside. B&B costs £35 per person per night.

A typical singing pub, The Laurels in Killarney features Irish ballad groups and boisterous music sessions most nights, while the Lord Bagenal Inn at Leighlinbridge and the Lobster Pot in Wexford are useful watering-holes for motorists driving from the ferry at Rosslare; both have won awards for their food and hospitality.

Irish Pubs of Distinction is available from the Irish Tourist Board (0171-493 3201).



The Vogalonga Regatta in Venice, where more than 1,000 rowing boats will take part in the 30km race on May 17

IN THE interests of fostering Anglo-Greek relations, the Halkidiki Hotel Association is planning to provide guests with Greek language sheets of simple words and greetings. Research among visitors last year showed that while most Greeks in the tourist industry have at least a smattering of English, few tourists could even muster "kalimera" (good morning), let alone tackle a menu. Our suggestions for useful phrases that might be added to the list include: "Ye gods, what on earth is in these meatballs?"; "Why is this basket in the loo?"; "Jellyfish ahoy!" and "Thank you, I already have a bag full of worry beads."

On the nose

VISITORS to Cuba's main resort of Varadero have complained recently of the stench of gas from oil wells southwest of the resort, which they claim have ruined their stay.

The solution is to choose one of the hotels at the eastern end of the 12-mile beach. Despite breezy conditions when I was there a few weeks ago, in this part of the resort where many of the newer hotels are situated — including the Bella Vista, the Tuxpan and the three Sol Melia hotels, the Las Americas, the Melia Varadero and the Sol Club Palmeras — there was not even a whiff. A week's B&B including flights at the attractive low-rise Sol Club Palmeras costs from £499-£695 in the Panorama (01273 202737) programme starting May 1.

Tokay tasting

HUNGARY'S "wine of kings", the often sweet, heavy tokay, was once quaffed daily by Catherine the Great and nurtured the tsars on their deathbeds. But it lost its way under communism, becoming a stale shadow of its former glory.

Wine tour specialist Arblaster & Clarke (01730 893344), however, reckons that after dramatic changes in post-communist Hungarian wine production, standards are well on the way to being re-established. It will attempt to prove this on a *five-day autumn tour*.

On the itinerary: the baroque town of Eger, home of "Bulls' Blood", tastings of single vineyard wines as well as Tokay "Asszu", and maybe even the precious and rare Tokay "Essencia". Traditional meals in top Budapest restaurants are also on the menu — likely to be hefty since the main ingredients of Magyar cuisine are pork, goose-fat and goose-liver, savoury and sweet dumplings and pancakes.

The tour costs £675 for flights, B&B hotel accommodation, four meals with wine, tastings and the expertise of the accompanying wine guide Atilla Sandor.

FIND OUT whether you can face a camping holiday en famille on a three-night break with Canvas Holidays (01383 644000). Tents are ready-pitched in château grounds just outside Bayeux, with lots of good sightseeing — the great tapestry, the hot-air balloon museum at the 17th-century Balleroy Château, the D-Day landing beaches and the Cave de Rossell where cider and calvados are bottled. A May break costs £104-£150 in total for two adults and up to four children, including ferry fares for car and passengers.

Travel articles in The Times *from January 1998 are on our Internet site. See "most recent" links on* http://www.the-times.co.uk

■ *FLY AWAY* — Lunn Poly (0990 811111) has two weeks in Alicante for £99 leaving Gatwick on April 28; seven nights in Reus, north east Spain, for £99 leaving Birmingham on May 2; and Malaga for £119 from Manchester on May 7.

■ AIRTOURS (0541 504 005) is offering four nights' B&B in Rome for £179 per person. Return flights depart from Manchester on May 4, 11, and 18; transfers and taxes included.

■ THE EUROPEAN ski season may be all but over, but in Swedish Lapland, the fun is just beginning. Riksgränsen, 250 kilometers inside the Arctic Circle, is the most northerly ski resort in the world. Lifts are open from 10pm to 1am from May 15 to the end of June. Return flights from Stansted to Stockholm with Ryanair (0541 569 569) start at £109 per person including tax, and the overnight train to Riksgränsen can be booked through German Rail (0181-390 8833) from £93 return. Accommodation only at the Hotel Riksgränsen (00 46 980 400 80) is from £30 per person per night. Contact the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council (0171-724 5868) for details.

■ EXPLORE Worldwide (01252 344161) is offering a 22-day tour of China, visiting the Stone Forest of Shilin, Mount Emei and Xi'an and Beijing, travelling by plane, train, boat and bus. The tour costs £1,790 including B&B accommodation, transport, guides, flights and UK departure tax. Departs Heathrow on May 17.

PACK YOUR BAGS

■ FAR EAST Travel Centre (0171-414 8808) is offering 12 nights' B&B at the Confifi Beach Hotel, on the south-west coast of Sri Lanka, for £388 until June 20. Return flights from Heathrow depart every Monday.

■ THE FALMOUTH to Fowey Passage race is from May 1 to May 5 this year. Classic Sailing (01326 270027) is offering four days for the price of three on a newly built wooden yacht. The Passage, including all meals, is £195 per person. No previous sailing experience necessary.

■ ANATOLIAN Sky Holidays (0121-633 4018) has reduced the cost of early summer sailing holidays in Turkey. Departing on May 8, one week's sailing in a traditional gulet costs £269, including flights from Gatwick or Manchester (£10 extra), transfers and full board.

■ THE Robin Hood Craft Fayre is the largest themed fair in the country. From May 2-4, Morden Hall Park in Surrey will be filled with craftspeople, conservation groups and entertainers from 10am-6pm daily. Adults pay £3.50, senior citizens £2.50 and children £1. Details: 01344 874787.

JOANNA HUNTER

FLYING VISITS

Departures: Monday 27 April to Saturday May 2, 1998
Lowest available published fares for return travel.

Route	Promotional Fare	Flexible Fare
London – Amsterdam	from £58 easyJet (ex-Luton)	£199 Transavia (ex-Gatwick)
London – Brussels	from £66 Virgin Express (ex-Heathrow/Gatwick)	£200 Sabena (ex-Heathrow/Gatwick/City)
London – Copenhagen	£125 Maersk Air (ex-Gatwick)	£390 Maersk Air (ex-Gatwick)
London – Dublin	£79 BA (ex-Gatwick)	from £129 BA (ex-Gatwick)
London – Glasgow	from £58 KLM uk (ex-Stansted)	from £158 KLM uk (ex-Stansted)
London – Madrid	from £125 Debonair (ex-Luton)	from £174 Debonair (ex-Luton)
Edinburgh – Munich	£129 BA	£648 BA
London – Nice	from £118 Debonair (ex-Luton)	from £136 Debonair (ex-Luton)
Manchester – Paris	£101 BA	£356 BA
London – Rome	from £99 Debonair (ex-Luton)	from £175 Debonair (ex-Luton)

Airline telephone numbers

British Airways (BA) 0345 222111 — Maersk Air 0171-333 0066
Debonair 0500 146200 — Sabena 0181-780 1444
easyJet 0990 292929 — Transavia 01293 596650
KLM uk 0990 074074 — Virgin Express 0171-744 0004

Notes

* Debonair fares include tax. Other fares shown exclude tax.
* Prices shown in the left-hand column are the lowest published excursion fares. Prices shown in the right-hand column are the lowest available flexible fares which do not require a Saturday night stay and which, in many cases, allow changes or cancellation without penalty. In all cases, you are advised to check the restrictions, if any, when booking.
* Availability is not guaranteed.

A home for Matilda

A MUSEUM dedicated to the 100-year-old ballad *Waltzing Matilda* has opened in a one-horse town deep in the Australian outback.

The 1,500 inhabitants of Winton turned to tourism after drought decimated the region's sheep-farming industry. This month the folk of the isolated town in western Queensland celebrated the opening of their £1.3 million, hi-tech Waltzing Matilda Centre.

The song was first performed in public in 1895 in Winton's North Gregory Hotel. It was written by solicitor and bush poet Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson while stranded with his fiancée by wet weather near Winton.

"Waltzing" is outback slang for carrying and a "matilda" is a bushman's bundle. The song tells of a swagman who drowns himself in a waterhole to avoid arrest after policemen find him with a stolen jumbuck, or sheep, in his tucker-bag.

The tune is said by some to have come from the Scottish marching song *Bonnie Wood of Craigielea*, while an alternative view is that it was derived from *The Bold Fusilier*, a 17th-century English soldiers' song. The latter includes the refrain: "*And he cried as he tramped through the dear streets of Rochester, Who'll be a sojer for Marlbro' with me?*"

Whatever the truth, there is no doubting *Waltzing Matilda*'s enduring appeal. By the time of the Gallipoli campaign in 1915, it had become Australia's favourite song, retaining its popularity today.

It is not, as some think, the national anthem — *Advance, Australia Fair* has that distinction. But *Waltzing Matilda* has been sung as Australian troops have marched to war and at numerous moments of national tragedy and jubilation.

THE MUSEUM'S buildings are set around a billabong, or water-hole; their shaded verandas inspired by the old homesteads of western Queensland's cattle and sheep stations.

The museum is, ironically, a direct result of the two-year drought which removed one million sheep from the region, taking with them £1 million in shearers' wages alone.

The significance of the song for Australians, with its colourful references to billabong and coolabah tree, is explored, with recordings made by artists as diverse as Bill Haley, Dame Edna Everage and Luton Girls' Choir.

The restaurant serves traditional Australian tucker, such as damper bread and roasts, cooked on wood-fired ovens and served by staff wearing 1800s-style costumes.

And visitors can even take home a video of themselves performing *Waltzing Matilda* karaoke-style.

● *The Waltzing Matilda Centre, Tel: 00 61 7657 1544/1188, or Fax: 76571342.*

COLIN SIMPSON

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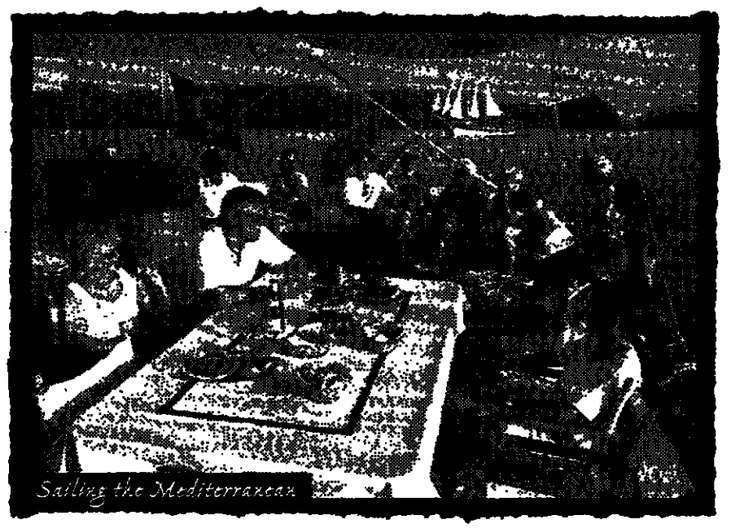
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A bullfight without the butchery

Barbara Jeffery celebrates spring in the marshland villages of the Camargue, where toreadors wave harmless hooks and the mighty beast is never killed

PHOTOS: KATZ



A spectacular leap to safety after the bull, irritated by the *razeteur*'s attempts to pluck the *attributs* from its horns, finally loses patience

Gallician, Générac, St Laurent d'Aigouze: despite their proximity to Arles, Nimes and Montpellier, these are not names you will find on any tourist map, which explains why I was the only outsider to share the May Day holiday with the good folk of the Petite Camargue.

I was on an old *peniche* (trading barge) converted into a four-cabin floating hotel, and we were tied up at Gallician, a hamlet on the Canal du Rhône à Sète halfway between St Gilles and Aigues Mortes.

My guide, Lysianne Boissy d'Anglas, was in traditional *gardian* (herdsman) dress when she collected me for the festivities: beige culottes, black embroidered bolero, sturdy boots and a flat hat.

May Day starts with the selection of the bulls for the afternoon's *course* (contest). In Nimes and Arles, as in Spain, the matador is the star. In the Camargue, where the bull is not killed, it's the beast.

Magali Saumade lives, dreams and sometimes eats bulls. Today she was sending two from a herd of about 100 to the course; but first they had to be separated from the others and put on the lorry. Magali, smoking hard and mounted on a tall Spanish horse, led her team of six volunteer *gardians* into the fields. She knew which bulls she wanted — and so did the bulls — they charged *en masse* into the next field. One stayed behind — Président, the best bull Magali has ever known, who recently reached retirement age (14) and knew he didn't have to take part in this weekly round-up.



The painstaking process of tying *attributs* to the bulls' horns

Several fields and several charges later, the galloping cowboys funnelled three bulls into the narrow, wired enclosure leading to the rustic arena; Magali slammed the iron gate, two men with tridents entered, shouting, and the bulls ran straight up the ramp into the lorry. It was like a beefed-up version of *One Man And His Dog*.

I climbed the ladder up the side of the lorry while a young man lay on the iron mesh roof and gently and slowly reached in to hook what looked like a flying bowline over one horn. Then, in an agonisingly slow and silent process (so as not to disturb the bulls), tassels and rosettes were attached to the strings or *ficelles* which the young *razeteurs* (bullfighters) would have to remove later with hooks attached to their fingers. Now it was midday, so back we went to Gallician, to the Café du Centre. A few tables were set up outside and there were buckets of lily of the valley for May Day gifts. The proprietor plonked two bottles of pastis on the table with a "help yourself".

Many restaurants in the South of France seem to have abandoned Mediterranean cuisine for the cream-laden cooking of Normandy, but here we had traditional southern food: a green salad with egg and tomato followed by the *plat du jour*, boeuf à la Provençal, a tasty stew with tomatoes and onions. There was a sorbet to follow — and all for less than £6.

Then off we went to Générac, a straggling village with cream-washed cottages and pink-tiled roofs. The main street in front of the town hall was blocked by farm vehicles, so we climbed into a trailer to see what was going on. It was an *encierro*, the next stage in the holiday ritual. Teenagers and younger children were sitting on a railed-off island in the centre of the square and letting off fireworks. Then at 3.30pm the ramp on a green lorry was opened and two bulls trotted down, to much cheering. They ran around the square and disappeared up a side street, pursued by the teenagers.

The bulls soon lost interest and headed back to the truck, whereupon two more were released. They duly trotted down one street, went around the block and emerged from the next quite baffled. The lads took refuge on the iron gates of the town hall as the bulls approached. They needn't have bothered, these spiritless bulls wouldn't even charge a telephone call.

"There are much better bulls," said Lysianne. So on we went to St Laurent d'Aigouze to see a *course Camarguaise* in a little wooden arena, built adjoining the church to annoy the priests. The original course had lions, dogs, bears and farmhands taunting the bull, but for the past century it has been confined to men and bulls and *attributs* — the flowers, scarves, rosettes (sometimes even sausages) which the *razeteurs* try to lift off the bulls' horns.

It's very different from a *corrida* (the *mise à mort*-style bullfighting so popular in Spain). A course consists of six bulls, each competing for 15 minutes. And it's the bullfighters — unarmed, dressed in white trousers and T-shirts — who get hurt, not the bull.

There is a trumpet call and the bull hurtles into the arena from the pen built on to the church. He has a minute to choose the place where he feels he can defend himself. I'm afraid our bull didn't like it at all and immediately dived over the barrier into the space between the ring and the terraces. A gate was opened to block his way and back he went, only to jump out three more times.

The next bull was furious. People in the front rows moved back when they saw him; he charged the barrier before the men entered the ring. It was this bull's first time in the ring and no one knew how he would react. The men stood around and the crowd complained that they weren't working the bull. They did their best; flapping their faded yellow and blue hand towels, and then a *razeteur* tried to hook the rosette from the bull's forehead. The bull charged and the *razeteur* took a running jump at the five-foot fence, leaping the 6ft-wide corridor into the terraces. He ended up in row five, scattering the audience. A tape recorder played a few bars of the *March of the Toreadors*, which is how they salute a good bull. This bull got three choruses before his 15 minutes were up and a leader bull wearing a bell was brought in to escort him out.

To the uncultivated eye, the course appears unstructured. But it has its form, with the assistants attracting the attention of the bull and the *razeteur* trying to remove the attributs before escaping over the barrier. At the end of the course, everyone makes for the streets to await the bandido, when the bulls run free. This is real excitement and there is a true party spirit. Little girls climb lampposts, toddlers in their Sunday best dance to the band: two drums, a trombone, trumpet and tuba playing bullfight music, then jazzed-up versions of local songs.

After 45 minutes a cannon shot signalled the start of the run. Three men on horseback chased three bulls along the narrow street. They went off into the sunset and we jumped down and followed the band back to the square, and sat under the plane trees with a glass of pastis while a middle-aged couple danced the tango.

CAMARGUE FACT FILE

■ **Getting there:** British Airways (0345 222111) flies daily from Gatwick to Montpellier, 31 miles from St Gilles; return flights from £228 until June 30.

■ **Where to stay:** Crown Blue Line (01603 630513) has a week's cruise on a four-berth self-catering boat on the Canal du Rhône à Sète starting at St Gilles from £780. Flights to Montpellier can be arranged from approximately £150 per person.
Blakes Holidays (01603 784131) has week-long self-catering barge trips in the Camargue in May from £790 for four adults. Ferries can be arranged.
Fleuve Trotter, at Port de Gallician, 30600 Vauvert (00 336 0952 4715) has double cabins for a week's cruise from £455 including all food, wine and use of the barge's bikes for excursions. Children welcome.
Angel Travel (01732 884109) organises tailor-made trips.

■ **Camargue bullfights:** St Gilles (May 1, 8); Vauvert (May 1, 3, 8). Gallician, Générac and St Laurent d'Aigouze will have fights in July this year (dates to be set).

■ **Guidebooks:** *France* (Lonely Planet, £13.99).

■ **Further information:** Contact the French Tourist Office (0891 244123, premium rates), 179 Piccadilly, London W1.

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SOLUTION TO EASTER MONDAY JUMBO 160

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The winner of the £100 Easter Monday Jumbo prize is Mrs N. Trinumins, of Horsham, West Sussex

هكذا من الأصل

Real motor-racing fans don't sleep – they drink beer and talk about Damon Hill. **Tom Chesshyre** joins in



Devotees gather at Spa-Francorchamps to watch their heroes race into battle



TOM CHESSHYRE

For the grand prix gang, this is a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon: sitting on a muddy slope in Belgium in the rain, being deafened by car noise

Chequered fun cheering Formula One

EUROPEAN GRAND PRIX 1998

1	April 26	San Marino (Imola)	5	July 12	Britain (Silverstone)	9	August 30	Belgium (Spa-Francorchamps)
2	May 10	Spain (Catalunya)	6	July 26	Austria (A1-Ring)	10	September 13	Italy (Monza)
3	May 24	Monaco	7	August 2	Germany (Hockenheim)	11	September 27	Luxembourg (Nürburgring)
4	June 28	France (Magny-Cours)	8	August 16	Hungarian (Hungaroring)			



It is 8pm at Victoria Coach Station in London. A colourful, excited group of people is gathered, many wearing T-shirts with pictures of motor-racing stars, and caps emblazoned with "Marlboro" or "Ferrari". A Michael Schumacher fan with a German flag draped over his shoulders is the centre of attention. "You might think I'm a traitor, but to me Schumacher is God," he announces bombastically (he has already had a few beers).

For a moment there is an ominous sense that one of the supporters of Britain's Damon Hill might take offence. There are a few disgruntled mutterings among the Union Jack holders: "Judas," says one large man in front of me. But his tone is good-humoured: it is mock disgust, not nationalistic rage. Motor-racing fans, it seems, leave out-and-out xenophobia to hardened football supporters.

I was travelling overnight with a group of 50 or so Formula One enthusiasts to the Belgian Grand Prix in Spa-Francorchamps on a budget package. For most British motor-racing fans, the F1 world championship, apart from the British Grand Prix at Silverstone in Northamptonshire, is a television sport. The cost of following races around the world is too high.

But there is a large, dedicated tribe of fans who try to watch as many live races as possible. To stretch funds, they travel cheaply — and in spartan fashion. Ahead of us lay two almost sleepless nights on the coach, 24 hours travelling and an afternoon on a muddy bank watching cars howl by at 180mph.

The journey had a *Carry On* feel. "Stewie", our guide, who works for the tour operator Motor Racing International, kept up a jokey commentary over the PA system: lots of gags about the coach "turning into the straight"; "wasn't that a tight hairpin"; "we're almost at the chequered flag now". The jokes wore thin after a while.

Plenty of beer was drunk on the ferry. In the bar, a group of lads noisily discussed the strengths of drivers. A huge Damon Hill fan held court: "Hill's had a few crap starts recently. I'll admit that, but he'll be OK as long as it doesn't rain too bloody much." He continued in this vein until we docked: other passengers — slightly shocked by the language — kept their distance.

On the coach I sat next to the Schumacher fan, Kurt Broadfoot, 25, a postman from Portsmouth. This was his 50th grand prix, what he described as a "golden anniversary". He was with two mates: Paul, a printer from Hertford, and Mike, a brewery employee from Northampton. They were also in their twenties, but the trip did include people in their late sixties, and a third of our number were women.

No one had more than a couple of hours of broken sleep. The die-hard fans considered not sleeping to be part of the experience, and I was jokingly accused of being a "lightweight" after I dropped off at 5.20am somewhere in Belgium.

We reached Francorchamps at 8am. It was a bright, crisp morning. We piled out of the bus and walked into the town centre, where we suddenly found ourselves in a seething sea of red.

Thousands of Schumacher fans had crossed the border from Germany (less than 30 miles away) to watch "Schumi", and they were all dressed in the red of Ferrari, Schumacher's racing team. Most of the British contingent felt a little out of place.

After a much-needed coffee we went to the circuit, set in the middle of the Ardennes forest. Our tickets gave us access to a long 180mph straight. There were no seats, so we placed sponge cushions on a rocky, muddy slope near a corner where the cars slow to 60mph. We were less than 15 metres from the racetrack, much closer (I was told) than you can get at Silverstone. Empty beer and cola cans, coffee cartons and old newspapers were already strewn everywhere. Glamorous it was not.

Groups of Germans shared our slope, but despite the open rivalry, there was no hostility. We were not totally outnumbered, as there were Brits on other package trips — the Belgian Grand Prix is the nearest foreign F1 race and usually sees a good turnout of British supporters.

We breakfasted on hot waffles. I also bought earplugs to counter the scream of the engines: the noise is incredible and only the most decibel-hardened fans went without protection.

It then rained for an hour, but everyone — except me — had come with umbrellas and waterproofs; the more experienced had even brought plastic sheeting. Our slope became treacherously muddy. "Now you know what grand prix fans have to go through," said Kurt, as we shared an umbrella.

The downpour stopped in time for the track to dry before the race. The cars thundered by. Everyone stood up and listened on radios tuned to a local station's commentary, which switched between English, French and German.

No cars crashed in front of us, but (much to our amusement) an overweight German Schumacher fan did. He had been precariously perched on top of a ten-foot perimeter fence, drinking beer, before he lost his balance and toppled dramatically into a grass bank on the other side. After being sniffed by a curious alsatian guard dog as he lay on the floor, he was helped back by security men.

The German debauchery raised eyebrows among the British, who watched the race quietly, intently listening to their radios. "I've come to watch the race, not a bunch of idiots messing about," said one fan, a little stiffly.

For British fans, the main excitement in the race came when David Coulthard, driving for MacLaren, took the lead. This pleased Colleen Mundy, a travel agent from Canterbury, who has a soft spot for the Scottish driver. Even though he was soon overtaken, she said that it had "made her day".

At the chequered flag, the red brigade got what they wanted. "Schumi! . . . Schumi!" the cry went up as Schumacher won. His fans (including Kurt) clambererd over the fence on to the track and hared off to see him sprayed in champagne on the winners' podium. The rest of us rolled up our flags and walked quietly to the coach. Damon Hill was fifth.

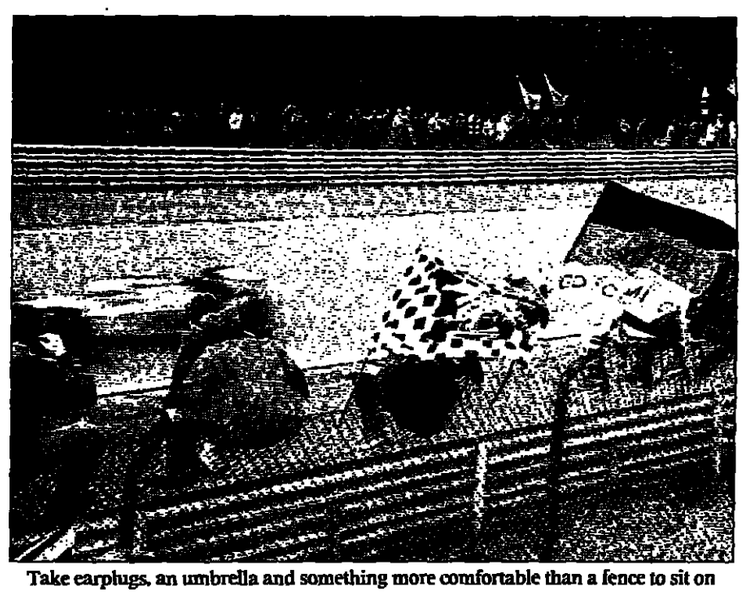
The general opinion was that it had been an exciting race, as the lead had changed several times. "It's boring when one driver leads from the front and wins," said Paul, who has five years of grand prix on video (some fans can be anorak-ishly obsessive).

We had a marathon trip home. We were stuck in traffic jams, just made a ferry and arrived, exhausted, at Victoria at 5.25am. The tube was closed, and there was a half-hour wait for a cab. We were red-eyed from lack of sleep, but no one seemed to care. "It was definitely worth it," said a Hill devotee. "Another grand prix under the belt. You've got to rough it a bit to be a true fan — it's a way of life for us now."

GRAND PRIX INFORMATION PIT STOP

■ Tom Chesshyre travelled to Belgium with Motor Racing International (01304 612424), which offers packages to this year's Belgian Grand Prix in Spa-Francorchamps on August 30. The cheapest option is an overnight coach out and back. Prices start at £59 from Dover, £69 from London, and £84 from the North. Alternatively, a two-night B&B stay at the Meridien Hotel in Brussels, with flights and transfers to the track, 85 miles away, costs from £259. An entrance ticket to the Belgian Grand Prix is a staggering £113 this year, the most expensive on the European circuit. The company offers trips to other grand prix races. A day trip from Stansted to Barcelona to watch the Spanish Grand Prix on May 10 costs £229 plus £50 for a general admission race ticket.

■ Tips: Take earplugs (it can get so noisy that your ears hurt). Also take a foam cushion or a shooting stick, an umbrella (it almost always rains at the Belgian Grand Prix), a radio (to listen to commentary) and a vacuum flask.



Take earplugs, an umbrella and something more comfortable than a fence to sit on

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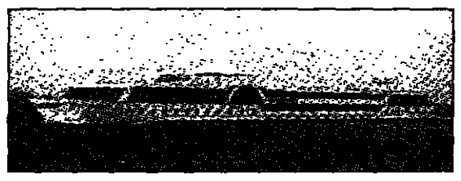
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THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London Heathrow to Vienna. Fly in the morning with Austrian Airlines. Embark MS Amadeus. Welcome drinks party, dinner and performance by string quartet. Moor overnight

Day 2 Vienna. This morning you may join an optional city sightseeing excursion. Free time in the afternoon for independent exploration of Vienna, a city on which the Hapsburg dynasty left its indelible mark. See some of the sumptuous palaces in which they lived, the churches in which they worshipped and in the Kunsthistorisches Museum and the Hofburg, the treasures they collected. Optional musical evening at the Palais Palffy, or similar. Moor overnight.

Day 3 Melk. Spend the day sailing through the lovely Wachau Valley enjoying the winter landscape and listening to the string quartet. Arrive Melk in the late afternoon. Optional excursion to Melk Abbey to celebrate Midnight Mass. Return to a midnight buffet supper on board.

Day 4 Estergom. Christmas Day will be spent cruising the Danube, with an excellent Christmas lunch and afternoon concert. We will moor at the Hungarian City of Estergom and stretch our legs in this ancient river city, before returning to the Amadeus for warming mulled wine.

Day 5 Budapest. Arrive in the early hours. An optional morning excursion will take you to both Buda and Pest. An exceptional view of the twin cities is seen from Gellert Hill. A visit will also be made to the ancient Mathias Church, for centuries the scene of the coronation of the kings of Hungary. In the afternoon you may join an optional excursion to the Museum of Fine Arts. Optional evening visit to the lovely Budapest Opera House for a performance (subject to final programme).

Day 6 Budapest. Morning free to explore the winding streets of Buda. Afternoon performance on board by Mme Buvan who will sing a number of traditional Hungarian songs.

Day 7 Bratislava. Morning on the river and concert performance. After lunch arrive in Bratislava, the Slovakian capital. An optional excursion will include the castle, Town Hall - a splendid Gothic-Baroque creation and the Prematial Palace.

Day 8 Vienna to London Heathrow. Arrive in the morning and disembark after breakfast. A morning excursion to the Schonbrunn Palace and Wagenburg. Lunch in local restaurant before transferring to Vienna Airport for the early evening flight with Austrian Airlines.

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The price includes: Economy class air travel, 7 nights aboard the MS Amadeus on full board (breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner & midnight snack), transfers, port taxes, music aboard the Amadeus, sightseeing programme and lunch on day 8, tour manager, UK departure tax, airport tax.

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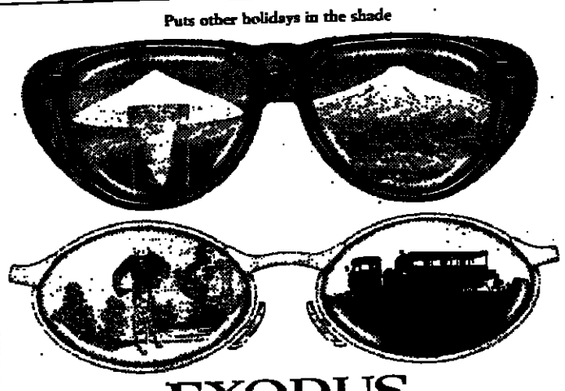
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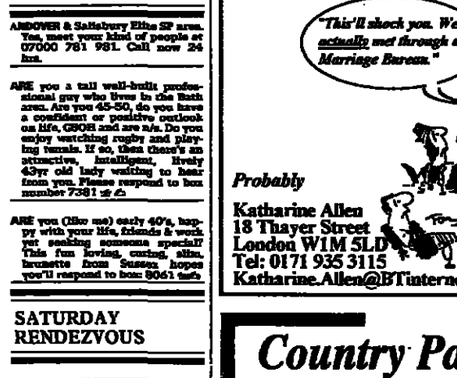
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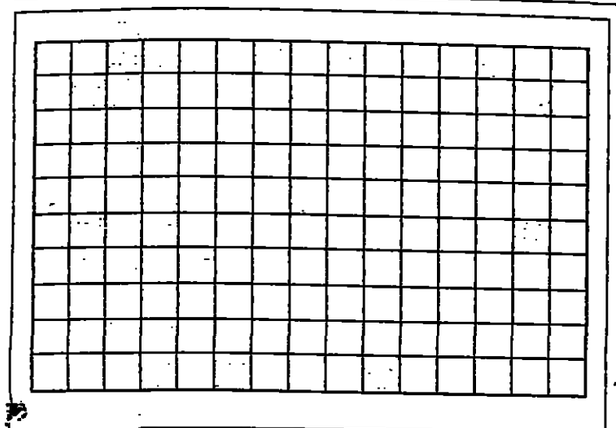
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THE TITLE is a cryptic clue to a two-word phrase, whose letters will be found jumbled in the shaded squares. This title phrase should be written below the diagram. The arrangement of the bars, which has 180-degree symmetry, is to be discovered, but need not be shown; it includes two entirely enclosed squares, which should be filled to complete a hidden reference (four parts, of 9, 5, 11 and 5 letters respectively).

Each numbered clue contains a redundant word or phrase. The initial letters of five of these (each a single word of more than one syllable) spell a word whose entry in Chambers confirms the hidden reference. The rest share a common feature with the title phrase, as noted in Chambers. Each clue's answer must have a letter omitted wherever it occurs before the residue is entered in the diagram. The 42 omitted letters (in clue order) spell a ten-word alternative clue to the title phrase. All clues and word-lengths in brackets refer to the full forms of the answers.

ACROSS

1 Bluebottle sharply hurt by Old Bill? Dispute with dupe after vocal exchange (4-4)
7 Most of mass of students is beaten — go on, swot (6,2)
12 Natural bathers rarely sporting tunic around lake (6)
13 Angels once stirred up apathetic parishen (8)
16 They'll stabilise wings near bowser — oil's flowing (8)
17 Scungy tumours, mostly unwholesome when recurring in fleshy adult (9)
19 Service station society sucks (5)
20 Dummy turning black around edges of urinals? Disinfectants needed (6)
22 Vigorous feet run in dance (5)
23 Punish resistance among bomb crew (6)
24 Football manoeuvre's too new for paddock playing (3-3)
25 Barracks for name in English test lobby (5)
27 Turnip in fancy back-blocks is leafy genus (3-4)
29 Vigorously flower, holding against European strength (6)
31 How economic figures are adjusted as one boomer is misrepresented in projection (10)
34 Wasting gutzers are disfiguring like black eyes, mostly (8)
36 Nom de guerre — act the part of hideaway, identity one gets into (4-4)
37 Drink nauseates company: moderation in everything (7)
38 Trimmer trimmers who set sets, tip tips? (8)
39 Why naughty Doris turned noisy and turbulent (8)

DOWN

1 Religious zealot following French singer (4)
2 Inattentive skivvy, drudge under posh toff (11)
3 Prisoner replaces one in prison boots and all for a lot of old letters (6)
4 Loss of honour? Friendly relations with heart muster round (5)
5 Put the acid on covered developing plate (5)
6 Title sharpie used in anger raised hard, sharp edge (6)
7 Settlement provided that covers uprising beneficial to mobs set against each other (4,3)
8 Romance squashed by anonymous foreign beauty (5)
9 Evening sun accentuates low point (9)
10 Measurements showing second five-eighths had the brands out of order (4-8)
11 Ancient thrust to get through Shanghai with difficulty (7)
14 Fort holds volatile, tinny old metal (7)
15 Affectionate, homely place, the railway sleep-out (9)
18 Formerly took in old postal notes with another label (7)
20 If not nearly covering me up, takes white coat off the dingbats? (7)
21 Elastic can be made cheaply from them (7)
26 Nay's unusual with chatty me! (3-3)
28 Awful battle-axe blocks sty with soil, shamelessly (7)
30 Souvenirs help me to follow exercises (Spanish bits) (5)
32 A stock agent fell in SW England without climbing opportunity (6)
33 Fry pud in brownie tin (5)
35 Art union leaning hard supports cultivation (5)

A	T	W	O	T	O	C	P	O	W	E	R	E
C	H	E	R	A	N	A	S	T	A	T	I	C
T	E	E	N	K	E	T	I	A	R	A	E	D
P	O	L	L	E	X	E	H	U	M	B	L	Y
A	R	A	B	I	I	R	E	R	N	E	S	S
P	I	N	S	N	A	C	R	E	E	S	U	I
E	S	E	V	E	N	O	T	I	M	E	S	A
R	E	T	V	S	E	R	A	C	F	E	T	S
B	R	I	G	I	A	N	T	O	S	S	A	T
I	N	C	A	L	F	E	U	N	G	U	I	S
R	E	D	S	E	A	R	A	G	U	R	N	S
C	A	B	A	L	L	E	R	O	O	G	E	E
H	T	H	R	E	E	D	C	U	B	E	D	N

Solution and Notes for No. 3456
Spot the Theme by Third Man

Theme: 3456, the number of the puzzle, depicted in the bars in the top half of the grid

Unclued across lights: TWO TO POWER SEVEN TIMES THREE CUBED (=3456). Solutions from which thematic element is removed: (SIX)TEEN; (FOU R)IRE; (THREE)NESS; (FIVE)PINSThe contents of the two otherwise blank squares are determined by the message that can be read in the shaded diamond: THREE FOUR FIVE SIX. Solvers were not required to highlight the diamond.

The winner is: Sally Findlay, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. The runners-up are: Mrs S.V. Richards, Huddersfield; J.W. Leonard, Sutton Courtenay, Oxon; M. Galloway, Marlow, Buckinghamshire; Ann Taggart, Mildenhall, Suffolk; Keith S. Burton, Harrogate.

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

GABRIEL CHAGAS of Brazil is one of only eight players to have achieved the triple crown of World Olympiad Teams (1976), Bermuda Bowl (1989) and World Pairs (1990). He has also contributed to the technical side of the game. In 1974, in a bridge tips competition sponsored by Bols liqueur, Chagas's tip was entitled The Intra-finesse. It described a layout such as:

	♠Q953	
♠102		♠KJ6
	♠A874	

The normal play is to cash the ace and lead towards the queen, hoping West has the king. If East is likely to have the king, then you may duck the second round.

Chagas pointed out a third option. On the first round declarer plays to dummy's nine and East's jack. Next he leads dummy's queen, pinning West's ten. Here is his example:

Dealer East — Love all. — Teams

	♠Q92 ♥654 ♦AQ3 ♣K843	
♠106 ♥10982 ♦54 ♣109752	N W E S	♠KJ7 ♥AKQJ ♦10976 ♣QJ
	♠A8543 ♥73 ♦KJ82 ♣A6	

Contract: Four Spades by South
Lead: ten of hearts

After East opens 1NT (15-17) South reaches Four Spades. West leads a heart. Declarer ruffs the third round and must decide how to play the trumps. East's opening bid marks him with the king of spades, so declarer's two choices are to play him for Kx or to try an intra-finesse.

Declarer starts by leading a low spade to the nine and East's jack. Declarer wins the club return with the ace and plays a club to the king and ruffs a club. When East shows out, that means he is likely to have three spades — if he had only two that would give East a 2-4-5-2 shape. On that he would probably not have opened 1NT; more significantly it would also mean West had a singleton diamond, which he surely would have led. So the only chance is to find West with an initial holding of 10x of spades. South crosses to dummy with a diamond and leads the queen of spades.

As for many suit combinations, the intra-finesse is easier for the defence than for the declarer. This is the spade suit from the above diagram:

	106	
A8543		Q92
	KJ7	

With South the declarer in a No-Trump contract West leads the four, declarer plays low from dummy and East inserts the nine. Then when East gains the lead he can lead the queen, picking up the rest of the suit.

WORD ANSWERS

Answers from page 36

PISHACHI
(c) A demon or devil. An adaptation of the Sanskrit *pisāca* (masculine). "Pishashas, in Vedic myth malignant woodland spirits, who disliked travellers, and especially pregnant women."

ROESTI
(c) A Swiss style of fried potatoes. (Variously taken as singular or plural.) The Swiss German word. "Each region [of Switzerland] has its specialties... sausages, roasts and fried potatoes (Röstl) in the German section."

PEAU DE CHAGRIN
(a) The title of a novel by Balzac (1831), in which a piece of shagreen diminishes in size as wishes are granted through its magic power. "I see my little allotted span of life shrinking visibly, like the peau de chagrin."

PFANNKUCHEN
(c) In Germany, a pancake. Len Deighton, *Funeral in Berlin*, 1964: "You got rid of your tail?" "He got a lapful of Pfannkuchen and scalding coffee."

TWO BRAINS

Answers from page 36

Question 1
Hydrogen 1, Helium 2, Lithium 3, Carbon 6, Oxygen 8. The numbers are the atomic weights of the substances.
Question 2
Pluto — Charon; Saturn — Titan; Uranus — Miranda; Mars — Phobos; Jupiter — Io; Neptune — Triton (planets matched with one of their moons).

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

IN THE early days of chess strategy, when the theory of the Queen's Gambit was in its infancy, it was thought Black's counter-chances were unavoidably based on an early ... c5. Many grandmasters later turned to the defence 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 to liberate their queen's bishop, without first obstructing it by ... e6. Champions such as Mikhail Botvinnik opted for the early ... c6 but then shut in the black queen's bishop with ... e6 as well. Matthew Sadler, the co-British champion, has a wealth of information about such systems in his latest book. The following game is one of the best.

White: Anatoly Karpov; Black: Alexei Shirov
Biel 1992
Semi-Slav Defence

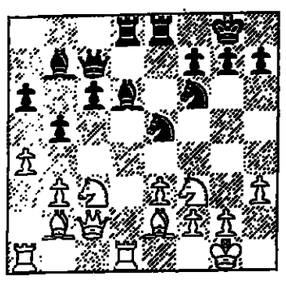
1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e3 e6 5 Nf3 Nbd7 6 Qc2 Bd6 7 Be2 0-0 8 0-0 dxc4 9 Bxc4 b5

With this move Black frees b7 for the light-squared bishop. He will play his bishop to the long a8-h1 diagonal and seek a quick ... c6-c5 to activate it fully. The main drawback of 9 ... b5 is that Black weakens his queenside squares — c5 in particular — a couple of moves before he is ready to repair the damage with ... c6-c5. White's general strategic aim must be to prevent ... c6-c5 in order to keep Black's light-squared bishop locked in behind the c6-pawn.

10 Be2 Re8

A more natural move is the immediate 10 ... Bb7.

11 Rd1 Qc7 12 b3 e5 13 h3 Bb7 14 Bb2 a6 15 dxe5 Nxe5 16 a4 Rad8?



This stereotyped move turns out to be a serious mistake. Armed with hindsight the game Arlandi v Illescas, played a year later at Lisbon, saw the Black improvement 16 ... Ng6 when 17 Ng5 can be met by 17 ... Be5, preventing the white knights from coming to e4.

17 Ng5 Qe7 18 Nce4 Nxe4 19 Nxe4 Bb4 20 Ng3!

A wonderful positional idea. The teasing threat of Nf5 is quite irritating and if Black anticipates it with 20 ... Qe6 then 21 Rxd8+ Rxd8 22 Qe4 is very unpleasant.

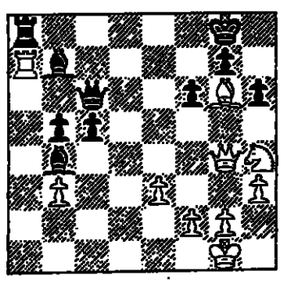
20 ... f6 21 Bxe5

An extraordinarily fine conception. Most players would be reluctant to give up such a powerful piece as White's queen's bishop but Karpov has correctly perceived that his attacking chances reside in the conquest of the light squares in the vicinity of the black king.

21 ... Qxe5 22 Bd3 h6 23 Bg6

White's advantage has been transformed due to Black's weak queenside dark squares to an attack on Black's weak kingside light squares. Karpov has displayed supreme artistry in what looked to be a microscopic advantage.

23 ... Rf8 24 Nf5 c5 25 axb5 axb5 26 Ra7 Qc7 27 Nh4 Rxd1+28 Qxd1 Ra8 29 Qg4 Qc6



Karpov now crowns his onslaught with a sacrifice which enables him to exploit his domination of the kingside light squares.

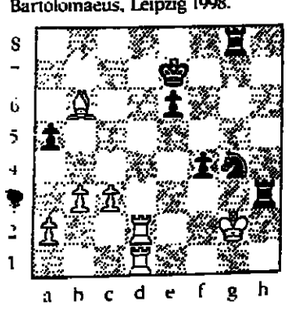
30 Rxb7 Qxb7 31 Qe6+ Kh8 32 Be4
Black resigns

● The Semi-Slav *by Matthew Sadler (Cadogan Books, £14.99).*

WINNING MOVES

by Raymond Keene

BLACK to play. This position is from the game Lausch - Bartolomaeus, Leipzig 1998.



Black's rooks on the open g- and h-files give him good tactical opportunities against the white king. How did he make the most of these?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society.

The answer will be published next Saturday.

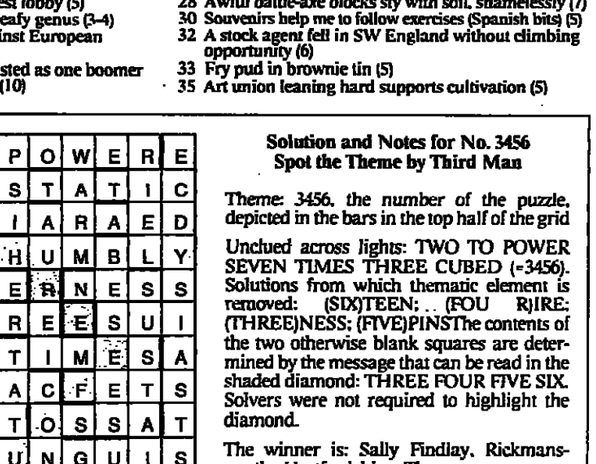
Solution to last week's competition: **1 Qxg6+** (1 ... fxg6 2 f7+ Qxf7 3 RhS mate)

The winner is: Roy Talbot, of Rugby, Warwickshire.

COMPUTER GAMES AND SOFTWARE

by Tim Wapshott

GETTY



The Foreign Office Web site offers worldwide travel advice

FANCY a career with the Foreign Office? Here is the key answer to stand you in good stead at the interview. No matter how bleak the job description appears, cheerfully reply: "I expect that this is typical and I can do this or would enjoy doing it."

The Foreign Office Web site (*http://www.fco.gov.uk*) throws up many choices, including an online questionnaire to find out your suitability to an overseas posting within the service. There are 53 questions with extremely limited multiple-choice answers. Think it would be unglamorous? Expect you would have to be a self-starter? Be required to get on with anyone you met in the course of your work? Cope with inquisitive locals staring because you are a foreigner? Be able to eat foreign food? Clearly the answer to all of these is "typical" and the reply the next question this prompts is that you "can or would enjoy doing it".

Completing the lengthy form is a bureaucratic exercise but 'owt else. Your answers are then used to calculate your overall ability to fit in — not well, quite well, well or very well. It hardly seems worth the effort, although there is plenty to read if you seriously hope to pursue embassy or Foreign Office work. Also found at FCO On-Line, as it calls itself, is a news service updated several times a day, including a posting of the FCO Daily Bulletin and a searchable reference library dryly listing speeches and international treaties.

All very well for Terry-Thomas/Carlton-Browne types but not most of us. There is, however, one area we can all appreciate — solemnly headed Consular and Visa Services. Some countries, we are advised, we should not visit under any circumstances. Examples include the Chechen Republic, Kashmir in India, or Iraq. Others should only be visited by Brits on official business, say to Albania, Rwanda or southern Turkey. A comprehensive database carries bluntly honest FCO travel advice reports on more than 130 countries.

The report on Egypt, last updated on March 13, reminds us that "in a major incident" 58 tourists were slain near Luxor on November 17 last year by gunmen. "Since the Luxor incident extremist groups have threatened further attacks against tourists: these threats should be taken seriously. Visitors to all parts of Egypt are advised to be vigilant and to respect any advice from the local security authorities, especially when in the Nile Valley south of and including Minya Province."

Visitors are also warned that road travel outside the main cities is "hazardous". Nor does Spain, visited by around ten million Brits a year, get off lightly. "Visitors should be aware that the terrorist group ETA (the Basque separatist movement) is active in Spain," it explains.

The report, last changed on March 11, adds encouragingly that the terrorists tend to target Spaniards rather than tourists. All the same, it warns: "Pickpocketing and handbag snatching are very common in larger Spanish towns. There has been an increase in violent crime, especially in Madrid."

AT THE "travlang" site (*http://www.travlang.com/languages/*) you can hear as well as read common words and phrases in 60 languages. Enter your mother tongue, decide which language you want to learn (from Arabic to Swahili, Welsh and Yiddish) and up pops a range of words, phrases and numbers. Clicking on any entry loads the corresponding short sound file so you can brush up on your pronunciation.

Another free facility is even more enticing. Some online language dictionaries accommodate a freeware programme which takes a passage written in English and translates it into a second language before your eyes.

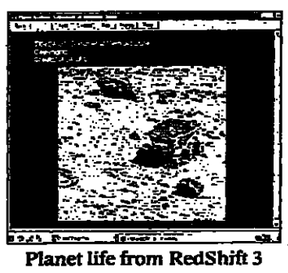
Travlang's homepage has some equally useful travel-related services. There are international calendars, currency exchange rates, maps and worldwide weather reports. The more obviously commercial facilities pay for the site, such as a worldwide hotel database and online booking deals for flights and car rental, plus many links to other travel and language sites.

NEW SOFTWARE

WHILE serious stargazers are in for a treat with **RedShift 3**, less eager viewers may find the experience daunting. Dorling Kindersley's CD-Rom puts the entire universe at your feet at any time in the past, present or future. This is a sophisticated programme with possibly the most comprehensive grasp of matters celestial. You can plot the positions of more than a million stars, planets and deep-space objects between 4,700 BC to AD 10,000.

Newcomers will either find this sort of detail fascinating or impenetrably ingenious. Other features are more inviting to first-timers. RedShift 3 goes some way to explain the complexities of the heavens with 60 short tutorial videos as well as some glorious colour animation sequences. It also has the text of last year's Penguin *Dictionary of Astronomy*, which can be easily searched, and a large library of astro-photographs including some picked up from the Pathfinder mission to Mars. A straightforward link to the RedShift Web site (*http://www.maris.com*) means it is easy to get updates of astrological news and statistics. The drawback is that it makes hefty demands on your computer. It will not work smoothly unless you are running at least a Pentium 100 MHz.

■ **Verdict: 8 out of 10. Space simulator for the serious astrologer, £29.99.**



Planet life from RedShift 3

A LUSH photorealistic woodland inhabited by fairies, pixie dust and butterflies springs to life in **The Fairy Tale** — A True Story Activity Center CD-Rom. This slight and slightly bewitching title, a "marketing opportunity" from the children's movie *Fairy Tale — A True Story*, begins in The Beck, the enchanting woodland filled with the sound of birdsong. Pretty flowers hide the host of treasures needed before the creative side of the title can begin. Clicking on hotspots brings fairies out of hiding or turns up objects for use later.

Once enough of these have been accumulated, the action shifts to the house where each window opens up a different activity room. In the darkroom, for example, pictures snapped in The Beck of fairies can be developed, saved and used later in pictures and journals. Some rooms offer more direct activities, such as pair-matching memory games, word-search puzzles and jigsaws. There are also databases of fairy facts and trivia. The other building, the theatre, houses the movie plug where scenes from the film can be viewed. Although these are in colour, the results are patchy and grainy. But fortunately there are a few games lurking here, too. In one you must help the great escapologist Harry Houdini free himself.

■ **Verdict: 6 out of 10. Movie spin-off and minor children's activity title. £19.99.**

SOLUTION TO EASTER JUMBO CROSSWORD 159

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The winner of the £100 Easter Jumbo prize is Mrs K. E. Halliday, of Newlyn, Penzance, Cornwall

MODERN MANNERS

by John Morgan

Send your queries to Morgan's Modern Manners, The Times, Weekend, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN

Q In most English churches today, the vicar, priest or minister says: "Let us all greet one another with the sign of peace." We are then expected to flit around the church, self-consciously shaking hands with each other and muttering "Peace be with you." I always stay in my seat and try to look as forbidding as possible, in the hope that people will leave me alone. But they never do, although I have explained forcefully and many times that I feel a perfect fool when I don't know the people shaking my hand, and even more of a fool when I do. How can I can opt out of the sign of peace without appearing to be rude? — Jane Hodgart, Cambridge.

A Many people share your embarrassment and go to all sorts of lengths to avoid it. The best way to do this is to make sure that you remain kneeling from the preceding section of the service, so that you are thus deep in prayer as the clergymen demands the peace sign. No Christian would dream of interrupting a fellow worshipper in personal communion with God, and you will be left undisturbed.



Q Any tips for dealing with a friend who appears to be *aping my life? I cannot buy a new item of* clothing without her producing exactly the same thing, and even my hairstyle seems to be in danger. Should I take it as flattery, or is there a discreet way of letting her know that I would prefer it if she developed her own style? — Mrs B, London SW17

A This is a question of exercising control with courtesy to steer your friend along the road to her own stylistic fulfilment, rather than mimicking you. Take her under your wing (she obvously admires your taste) when shopping for clothes, visiting the hairdresser or pursuing beauty in other ways. When you find her gravitating towards the same thing as you, say in a self-deprecating way, "Oh why don't you try this? You've got a much better complexion than me and really could easily carry a brighter colour, a more dramatic hairstyle," or whatever platitude seems appropriate. In this way you will, with any luck, have a confident well-dressed chum rather than an annoying little clone.

Q I eat out frequently with my parents, but despite their precise instructions I have much trouble coping with Dover sole on the bone. I do ask for it off the bone but this does not always happen. I think written instructions would be better. — Name and address withheld.

A This delicate activity requires logic and a basic understanding of piscine anatomy. First, score down the backbone of the fish starting at the head and moving to the tail. Then trace around the perimeter in the natural break between the fillet and the base of the frill (fins).

Next, starting with the top half, lift away the flesh of the fillet from the bones. The most usual way is to start at the head and work left to right towards the tail, then do exactly the same thing with the half nearest you.

After you have eaten all the flesh on top of the bone, it is then time to attack the under-side of the fish. On no account should you turn over the bone while it is still attached to the fish. This still remains a social solecism. Instead, gently lift the bone off the fish on to the side of your plate before moving on to the rest of the flesh.

Q When I write to members of my family and friends, I always start my letter by addressing my blood relative or original friend first, and then adding the name of his or her spouse or partner: eg Dear Susan and James (Susan being my daughter, sister, niece, friend, etc). I am therefore puzzled to find that frequently, when my husband and I receive letters or cards from them, they are nearly always signed with the husband or partner's name first, even if the writer is a female blood relative. Have I been taught to write letters incorrectly? — Name and address withheld.

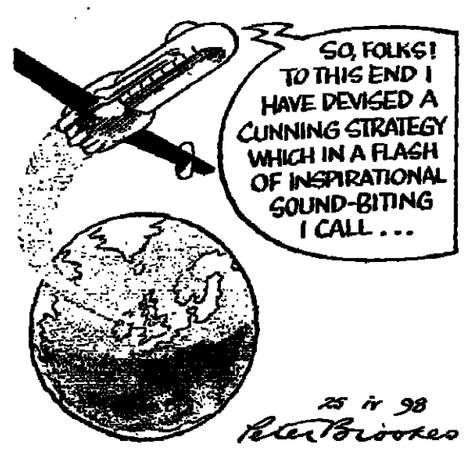
A Feminists may quail (if indeed they do that sort of thing) but it is still the social convention to style all married couples with the man's name first. As you obviously wish to avoid this, I suggest that you correspond, whenever possible, directly with the blood relations and friends alone, while making reference to their other halves elsewhere in any text.

Q I recently took my son and his young family out for a pub lunch. I was forbidden to tip, as he says that it is only done for a restaurant meal. Is this so? — Josephine Bromley, Leominster, Herefordshire.

A It depends on how sophisticated the catering arrangements are. If the pub is of the old style where customers merely order and pay for their food at the bar, then there is no need to tip. If, however, the hostelry has aspirations to be a restaurant, and offers a level of service where food is ordered at and brought to the table, then the usual restaurant-style tipping systems apply.

● *The author is Associate Editor of GQ*







WORD WATCHING

by Philip Howard

PISHACHI
a. Leaf tobacco
b. Piffle or codswallop
c. A demon

ROESTI
a. A fortified wine
b. A breed of pony
c. Fried potatoes

PEAU DE CHAGRIN
a. Time, ever flowing
b. Goatskin leather
c. Never saying sorry

PFANNKUCHEN
a. A four-wheeled bicycle
b. Faction
c. A pancake

Answers on page 35

TWO BRAINS

by Raymond Keene

MODERN science has dispelled many myths about the planets. Once, Mercury was thought to be the smallest, hottest planet, with one face pointed in the Sun's direction. Modern observation has shown that Pluto is the smallest and Venus the hottest, while Mercury's spin is exactly two-thirds of an 88-day orbital year.

Question 1
Match these substances with these numbers: Hydrogen, Helium, Lithium, Carbon, Oxygen
6, 2, 8, 3, 1

Question 2
Match the names from the first list with the second: Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto.
Charon, Titan, Miranda, Io, Triton, Phobos.

Answers on page 35

CROSS WORDS

by Brian Greer

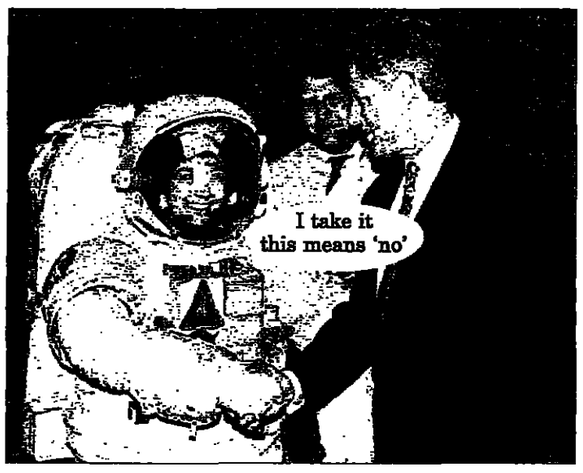
The Bengali crossword I mentioned last week, whose name translates as "Word Waves", uses a variety of cryptic devices. These include double meaning clues, one example leading to a word that means both "a barber's tool" and "crescent-shaped". Another clue, which translates as "Someone who's as timid as a cow", is based on a word, the whole of which means "very timid" and splits into components meaning "cow" and "poor thing". Literary references, such as to the work of Tagore, are also common.

I am always delighted to encounter words in context that previously were known only through the virtual environment of crosswords and dictionaries. In India I stood under a peepul tree, for example, and saw a notice in a railway station about godowns. Since my return I have been dipping into *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases* (second edition, 1903) by Colonel Henry Yule. (The term "Hobson-Jobson", meaning "folk etymology", is generally taken to be a corruption of the ritual lament for the grandsons of Muhammad.) In a Hobson-Jobson contest in Stoppard's *Indian Ink*, the heroine strings together "While having tiffin on the veranda of my bungalow I spilled kedgeree on my dungarees and had to go to the gymkhana in my pyjamas looking like a coolie", to which the hero counters "I was buying chutney in the bazaar when a thug who had escaped from the chokey ran amok and killed a box-wallah for his loot, creating a hullabaloo and landing himself in the mulligatawny".

Yule reveals that forms of the place-name "Bengal" can be dated back to the 11th century, while Marco Polo in 1298 called it "Bangala". Further, "Bengal" was the name given to a material exported thence to England in the 17th century, but long before that the Moors of Spain called fine muslin "albangala", surviving in Spanish "albengala".

The writer is Crossword editor of The Times

PICTURE LINE



READERS are invited to suggest what was said when England coach Glenn Hoddle met faith healer Eileen Drewery.

This picture will appear again next week with an entry chosen from those submitted.

Send "speech bubble" suggestions — only on postcards, please — with your name and address to PictureLine, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.
The closing date is Wednesday, April 29.

Last week's winning caption, left, was submitted by Stephen Oglesby, of Smitterfield, near Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.



QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"The system for tickets is well-rehearsed and organised" — *World Cup official on the chaotic telephone hotline for buying tickets*

"The chances of getting through are about one in two million" — *Academic football fan's analysis of the ticket system*

"The Government thinks beef on the bone is too unsafe for the Scots but that Dounreay, which is falling apart, is a convenient dump for nuclear waste" — *Alex Salmond, Scottish Nationalist Party leader, on secret deal to reprocess former Soviet plutonium*

"I didn't want to do it because your prestige in cinema tends to drop if you do television" — *Sean Connery turns down a part in US sitcom* Friends

"It is important he gets a good night's sleep" — *German embassy explains why it sent officials to jump up and down on hotel beds in Cardiff where their 6ft 5in Chancellor will stay in June*

"It could be of particular use to schoolchildren" — *English Heritage justifies listing a rabbit warren as a historical monument*

"Geoffrey was very persistent in his marriage proposals" — *Italian actress Annabella Incontrera refers to an alleged affair with the multi-millionaire Paymaster General*

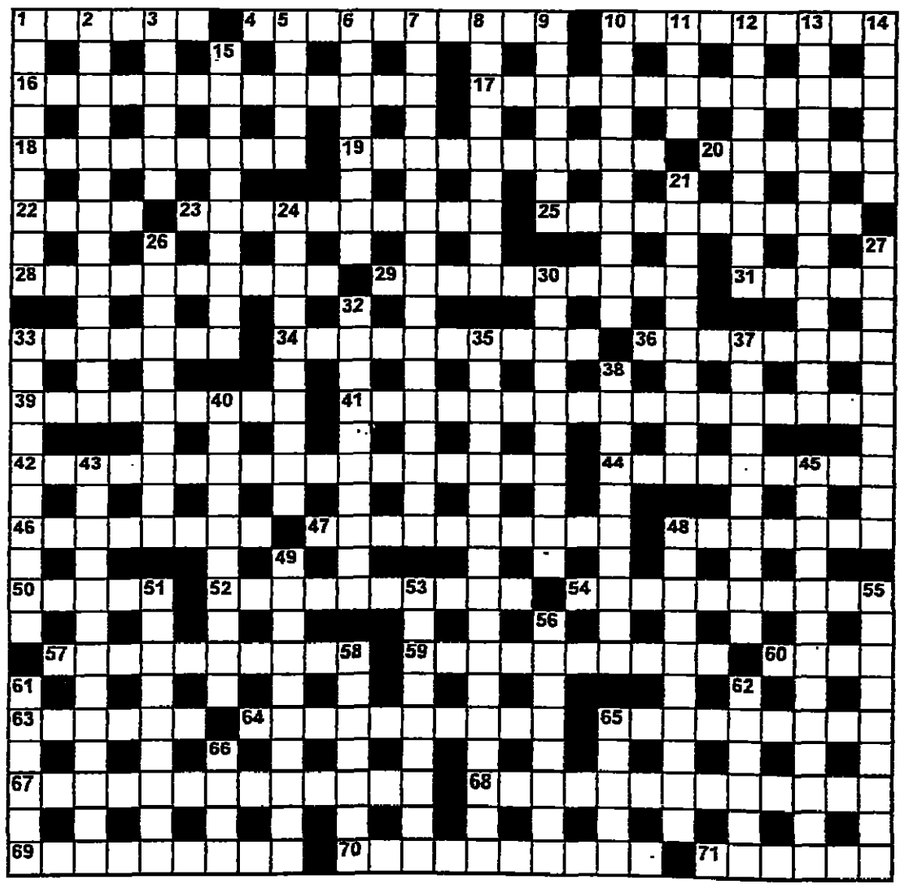
"It's getting a bit like Chicago" — *PBO Ferries describing smuggling and crime at Dover*

"The three-piece suite mentality still dominates" — The Times *on Lord Irvine's newly decorated official apartments*

JUMBO CROSSWORD 162



The prize for the first correct solution to be opened will be a collection of five Oxford University Press titles, the world's most trusted reference books, valued at more than £100. Included are *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* and *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations*. Entries should be sent to: Jumbo Crossword 162, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN to arrive by Thursday, May 7. The name of the winner will be published in Weekend on May 9



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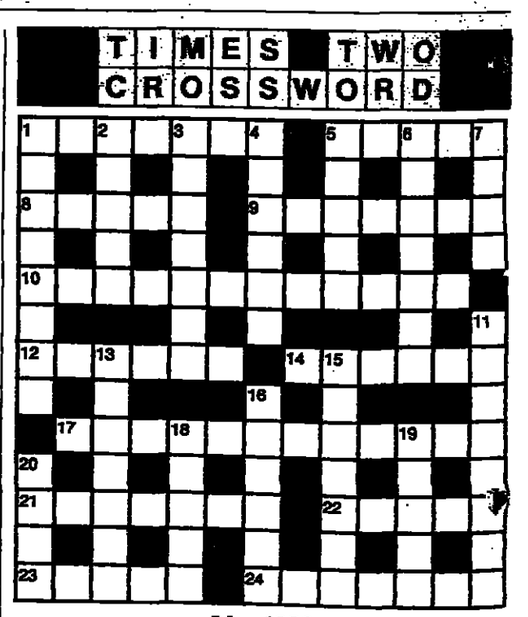
ACROSS

1 Computer circuit — the best (6)
4 Tightened up coverage of film (6-4)
10 Stymied, upset about moment's lack of decorum (9)
16 Appear ignorant, and emulate the officer in 21 (4,1.5,3)
17 Bring out evidence of what's charged, after furious search (5-8)
18 Should have been providing examples of such verbs (9)
19 This must be squared with the chance to design a Jumbo (5.5)
20 Stick-in-the-mud? (6)
22 Equivalent of 62's missing article found in a valley (4)
23 Expert history teacher (4,6)
25 Studying pamphlet by worker? It may exert a pull on one (10)
28 Create pool specially for type of insects (10)
29 Intended to shrug off the effects of a fall? (10)
31 Trumping opponents, I shall produce a flush (5)
33 Material for DIY sent is wrong thickness (7)
34 Denying giant blunder, began to be shifty at first (10)
36 Successful with solo performance — up to number one (4-4)
39 In the morning, Heather sent back article and various US items (9)
41 Doctor appearing in same brief citation as US serviceman (10,7)
42 Ben and Emma perhaps also given some stick — being cut off by father? (4,4,3,6)
44 Butter for mother? (5-4)
46 Skint? Here, debit shows if you are (2,3,3)
47 Damned popular colleague's taken over the plant (10)
48 Hint put in to forward some king of payment (7)
50 He wrote notes about English cricket (5)
52 Hold reporting damage to this global defence system (5,5)
54 Given only a minor role, by the way (10)
57 Detectives arresting Jack appear to be back in favour of social equality (10)
59 Scheme I almost headed, given a shot (10)
60 Heard of drink suitable for hen-party? (4)
63 One taken on board by factory is flexible (6)
64 I cast crime production, requiring an expert on China (10)
65 Love to lay back, in a position to be a playboy? (9)
67 Initially, one in charge of health service extended standard procedure (5,5)
68 Maybe small vessel catches fish of dubious quality (2,5,6)
69 Support for rail link at flight terminal (5,4)
70 One may shoot back for cosy stay (10)
71 Member of French department in British school (6)

DOWN

1 Race light model, inclined to be slow? (9)
2 French of a very high standard (3,11)
3 Source of advice, heading off small boat (6)
5 Something for wiping baby's bottom? Some wool first (5)
6 Exotic "word-image" originally written out? (8)
7 Stick with a good poker hand, having the nerve to do this? (4,1.8,4)
8 Favourite bay, perhaps at some distance (9)
9 Sick as a parrot? Get it in proportion! (3,4)
10 Examination course? (10)
11 Lippy expression muttered low (4)
12 An original thinker, in his own estimation (9)
13 Double dose of vintage satire (8,5)
14 Statesman betting on several races (6)
15 Long railway must skirt meadows — it's a bit of a joke (10)
21 Hold Len up, or a boy? (4,6)
24 On the surface, it promotes smooth flow of traffic (10)
26 If one interrupts VIP, that should be reported (10)
27 Took turns to edit translation of Dante (10)
30 Long feeling of resentment that grows from source of deal (4,6)
32 One name on testimony appears conspicuous (2,8)
33 Tie the game, offering solid defence? (10)
35 Somewhat befuddled, translating into indirect speech! (5,3,9)
37 Old fortune-hunter is square, right? (5-5)
38 As a result of crossing a reef the wrong way, one feels insecure (6,4)
40 Fairly unaffected by the examiners? (5,5)
43 Small pains, you say, lead diagonally across here? (7,6)
45 Facing the arbitrator, finishing run-up to possible dismissals (4,3,6)
48 Unexpectedly lifts pace, boxing in one to beat (10)
49 Member of WI slightly put out by huge rodent! (10)
51 Stretch inside for going round selling weed? (9)
53 Having a breather — changing when coming out of the pool? (9)
55 Provides housing for each non-professional (9)
56 Write about new monitoring device beginning to operate in defence HQ (8)
58 Some 56 narcotics turned up in old lake-dwelling (7)
61 English representative abroad put up with article about our ancestors (6)
62 Make an assembly understand (6)
65 Riddle set up days before one's cracked it (5)
66 Colleague loves to go round very quietly (4)

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No. 1389

ACROSS

1 Conveyance; medium (7)
5 Impart knowledge (5)
8 Class, degree (5)
9 Of current interest (7)
10 Special time on calendar (3-6,3)
12 Brief with the latest (6)
14 One suckling its young (6)
17 Easy to understand, em ploy (4-8)
21 Unyielding (orig. stone) (7)
22 Ice-house (5)
23 Item of belief (5)
24 Exclusive London district (7)

DOWN

1 Full of strength (8)
2 Store up (5)
3 Merciful; various popes (7)
4 Distinct thing (6)
5 Gradually thin (5)
6 Greet with joy, praise (7)
7 Ship frame; pea pod (4)
11 Theatre patron (8)
13 Mild contempt (7)
15 A pleasant provision (7)
16 For the moment (*abbr.*) (3,3)
18 Cook (joint); criticise harshly (5)
19 River-mouth, aircraft-wing shape (5)
20 Style of walking (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1388

ACROSS: 5 Transparency 8 Klaxon 9 Stifle 10 Tick 12 Ancient 14 Bollard 15 Fell 17 Kennel 18 Gibbon 20 Blarney stone

DOWN: 1 Stiletto heel 2 Marx 3 Passing 4 Medicine 6 Sane 7 Colonel Bogey 11 Culinary 13 Trolley 16 Eggs 19 Buoy

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